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PICTURES OF GERMAN LIFE

IN THE

FIFTEENTH, SIXTEENTH, AND SEVENTEENTH CENTURIES.

VOL. I.

PICTURES

OF

GERMAN LIFE

IN THE XVth XVIth AND XVIIth CENTURIES.

BY

GUSTAV FREYTAG.

Translated from the Original by

MRS. MALCOLM.

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TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE.

THE great interest which these graphic Pictures of Life in Germany have created in that country, has induced me to translate them. The object of the distinguished author seems to have been, to convey a lesson, a warning, and at the same time an encouragement to his countrymen, derived from the experience of the past; whilst he demonstrates to other nations how it is, that a people so superior in intellectual power, has remained so far behind in social and political development.

I have also felt as an additional reason, that at the present moment, the British public must take a deep interest in everything connected with the past, and future, of the country in which the daughter of our beloved Queen has cast her lot, and which was the Fatherland of the revered Prince, who has been a source of blessing to England for so many years, and whose irreparable loss we now so deeply deplore.

GEORGIANA MALCOLM.

CONTENTS.

FIFTEENTH AND SIXTEENTH CENTURIES.

PAGE

INTRODUCTION.—Life of a German proprietor, 300, 200, and 100 years ago—In what respect the life of the past appears alien to us—Greater repression of the individual mind—Significance of the last four centuries 3

CHAPTER I.

SCENES FROM THE HUSSITE WAR (1425)—Emigration of Germans to the east after the thirteenth century—Silesia and its Sclave Princes—Colonization, the blessing of free labour recognized—Character and fate of the German Silesians—Contrast of the Bohemians—NARRATIVE BY MARTIN VON BOLKENHAIN—Consequences of the Hussite war and subsequent fate of the Silesians 17

CHAPTER II.

A GERMAN LADY OF THE ROYAL COURT (1440)—Development of the popular mind in the Hussite time—Life at Court—The last of the Luxemburgers—The Hungarian Crown—NARRATION OF HELEN KOTTANNER—Struggles of conscience in the fifteenth century 36

CHAPTER III.

A TRAVELLING STUDENT (1509)—Characteristics of the fifteenth century—Introductions in the sixteenth century—Excitement in the people, wandering propensities, exciting news, Landsknechte, art of printing—German learning; the Humanitarians—The Latin schools, the children of the people as scholars—NARRATIVE OF THOMAS PLATTER—Influence of the Latin schools upon the people 57

CHAPTER IV. PAGE

THE MENTAL STRUGGLES OF A YOUTH, AND HIS ENTRANCE INTO A MONASTERY (1510)—The wants of the popular mind—The church — Brotherhoods; Indulgences—Opposition to them—NARRATIVE OF FRIEDRICH MYCONIUS 82

CHAPTER V.

OUT OF THE CLOISTER INTO THE STRUGGLE (1522)—The storm among the people—Luther's popularity—NARRATION OF AMBROSIUS BLAURER—The knight from the Wartburg—NARRATIVE OF JOHANN KESSLER 96

CHAPTER VI.

DOCTOR LUTHER (1517 to 1546)—His importance to us—The tragic in his life—Distinct periods in it—His father—Mental struggle in the monastery, and how he delivered himself from it—His character in 1519—Three letters to the Pope—An inward struggle—Luther as a writer—At the Wartburg—Adherence to Scripture, and defects in his method—The marriage of priests—Return to Wittenberg—His political position—The crisis—How he married—Activity of his latter years—His spirit, his family, his God, his temptations, and ideas of the end of the world—From the funeral discourse of Melancthon—LETTER OF LUTHER TO THE ELECTOR FRIEDRICH THE WISE, March, 1522 110

CHAPTER VII.

GERMAN PRINCES AT THE IMPERIAL DIET (1547) — Luther and Charles V.—The Roman Empire—Possibility of a new confirmation — The man wanting — Princes of the sixteenth century—Charles V.—NARRATIVE OF BARTHOLOMÄUS SASTROW —Weakness of the Imperial power—Alliance of the German opposition with France—Internal disorganization of the empire 161

CHAPTER VIII.

A BURGHER FAMILY (1488)—Insight into the lower circles of German life—Increasing popular strength—Social superiority of the Protestant provinces (1542)—Insecurity of life—FAMILY HISTORY OF BARTHOLOMÄUS SASTROW 184

CHAPTER IX. PAGE

THE MARRIAGE AND HOUSEKEEPING OF A YOUNG STUDENT (1557) —The female sex among the Germans—Position of women in the middle ages—Marriage considered as an alliance between families —The betrothal—NARRATIVE OF FELIX PLATTER 204

CHAPTER X.

OF A PATRICIAN HOUSE (1526 to 1598)—The patricians rich and educated—Hans Schweinichen's account of the riches of the Fuggers—Their women—Clara Pirkheimer and Argula von Grumbach—LETTERS OF A LADY OF THE GLAUBURG FAMILY .. 223

CHAPTER XI.

GERMAN NOBILITY IN THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY (1500)—False position in the nation—Unproductiveness—Gradual change—Character of Götz von Berlichingen—EXTRACT FROM HIS AUTOBIOGRAPHY—Character of Schärtlin—NARRATIVE OF SCHARTLIN —Hans von Schweinichen and Duke Heinrich von Liegnitz—NARRATIVE OF SCHWEINICHEN—Transition to modern life .. 241

CHAPTER XII.

GERMAN IDEAS OF THE DEVIL IN THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY (1500) —The introduction of German traditions concerning him; change in the middle ages—Luther spiritualizes the ideas regarding the devil—Activity of the devil in the new Church—Compacts with the devil after Luther's time—Favourable position of the possessed—The money devil at Frankfort—SATAN EXORCISED FROM ONE POSSESSED—Witches—Dreadful persecutions—Gloomy state of men's minds at the end of the sixteenth century .. 281

DEDICATION.

To my dear Friend Solomon Hertzel.

Without your knowledge I dedicate this work to you, who have taken so kind an interest in it, whose excellent library has so often helped when other sources failed, and where, as industrious collectors, we have examined so many old flying sheets and manuscripts.

To you also these records of the olden times, in which the private life and feelings of the writers are portrayed, are especially valuable, for by them a clear light is thrown on events in our political history which till now have been only occasionally noticed, and we may discover from them how the German people have felt, suffered, and lived.

If these records of individuals can be judiciously arranged according to periods and their position in life, it appears to me that an instructive insight may be obtained into the gradual development of the mind of the German people.

I have endeavoured to carry this out from the middle ages to the beginning of the present era.

What I have added of my own is simple explanation: I have avoided saying anything where it could be given in the original; only where the old records fail to give a complete picture have I supplied the deficiency.

As there are very few who can read the language of the fifteenth, or even the seventeenth, century with ease, I have thought it necessary to translate the records into modern German, but at the same time to preserve something of the old style.

Accept kindly then, my friend, what of right belongs to you, for your flag waves on every vessel that I launch; and I trust that the freight that I have this time prepared, may meet with your hearty approbation.

GUSTAV FREYTAG.

Siebleben, 8th October, 1859.

INTRODUCTION.

In vain does the German seek for "the good old times." If even the pious zealot who condemns Hegel and Humboldt as the greatest of Atheists, or the conservative proprietor who is struggling for the privileges of his order, were to be thrown back into one of the last centuries, he would feel first unmitigated astonishment, then horror, at the position in which he would find himself placed. What now appears to him so desirable would make him miserable, and he would be driven to despair at the loss of all the advantages of that civilization which he at present so little appreciates.

Let a German proprietor endeavour to realize to himself the position of one of his ancestors in the year 1559. Instead of the house he has now, built in the old German style, surrounded by its English pleasure-grounds, he would find himself shut up in a gloomy, dirty, and comfortless building, placed either on a height destitute of water, and exposed to the cutting blasts of the wind, or else surrounded by the fœtid smells of stagnant ditches. It is true that three generations back dim panes had been added to the small windows,* and large stoves of Dutch tiles, which were fed with logs from the neighbouring forest, kept the cold out of the

* It was not till after the fifteenth century that glass became common in windows in towns; and about the same time they began to find out the comfort of separate rooms. And it is thought worthy of mention, that in 1546, Luther's bedroom at the palace of Eisleben was protected by windows that closed.

sitting-rooms; but the accommodation was limited, as it was occasionally necessary to defend the house against attacks from the citizens of the nearest town, roving bands of marauders, or reckless soldiers bent on revenge because they had been cheated of half their pay by the neighbouring prince.

Comfortless and dirty is the house, for it is occupied by many others beside the family of the owner: younger brothers and cousins, with their wives and children, numberless servants, amongst them many of doubtful character, men-at-arms, labourers, and in 1559, mercenaries, may be added. In the court-yard, from the dung-heap is heard the cry of children quarrelling, and from round the kitchen fire the no less inharmonious sound of wrangling women. The children of the house grow up amongst horses, dogs, and servants; they receive scanty instruction in the village school; the boys keep the geese* and poultry for their mother, or they go with the village people to the wood to collect wild pears and mushrooms, which are dried for the winter meal; the lady of the castle is housekeeper, head cook, and doctor of the establishment, and is well accustomed to intercourse with lawless men and to the ill-treatment of her drunken husband. She is faithful, a thorough manager, proud of her escutcheon, of the gold chains and brocades belonging to the family; she looks suspiciously on the dress and finery of the wives of the counsellors of the town, who she considers have no right to wear sable and ermine, velvet dresses, pearls in their hair, and precious stones round their necks. The love and tenderness of her nature frequently gave elevation to her countenance and manners; but in those days, both in the homes of the nobles and in the courts of princes, much was considered decorous and was permitted to women of the highest character in

* Little Hans of Sweinichen was deprived of his post as gooseherd because he had tried to keep the geese quiet by gagging them with small pieces of wood.

familiar conversation which now would be condemned as unseemly in the wife of a common labourer.

The daily life of the landed proprietor is one of idleness or wild excitement. The hunting is certainly excellent. Where the forest has not been laid waste by the reckless stroke of the axe, grow the stately trees of the primeval wood; the howl of the wolf is still heard in the winter nights; the hunters sally forth on horseback, with spear and cross-bow, against beasts of prey, stags, roedeer, and the wild boar, and all adopt the habits of the rough hunters. But whilst hunting, even in his own wood, every one must be provided with weapons against other foes than the wolf and the boar. There are few hunting-grounds concerning which there is not some quarrel with a neighbour or feudal lord, who often claims the right of following the chase up to the squire's castle; the squire is also set at defiance by the peasants of the nearest village, whose crops have been laid waste by the stag and the boar, and who hates the master of the castle for having beaten or thrown him into prison for crossing the path of the chase; and not unfrequently an arrow whistles through the darkness of the wood with other aim than a wild animal; or an armed band breaks through a clearing, and then begins a race for freedom and life. We will suppose the game to be brought home and cut up in the castle yard; then follows the banquet, with endless drinking of healths and wild revelry, and seldom a night passes without the whole party breaking up in a state of intoxication. Drunkenness was at this time a national evil, prostrating alike the powers of princes, nobles, and people. The guests at the hunt and the banquet are of the same rank as their host—some are old cavaliers, constantly swearing, and relating anecdotes of the knightly feats they have performed in the greenwood against the traders and townspeople; others a younger race, hangers-on of the great

feudal lords, who proudly wear the gold-laced caps given by these lords to their vassals.

Thus the week passes away. On Sunday it is considered a duty to attend the village church, and listen to the preacher's endless sermon, which generally breathes hatred to Calvinists or Papists, and denounces the factious Schwenkfeld or the apostate Melancthon. There is but little intercourse with foreign countries: the country gentleman gratifies his curiosity by buying from the itinerant pedler what was then called a newspaper, being a few quarto sheets published at intervals in the towns, containing very doubtful intelligence, such as a horrible fight having taken place between the sons of the Turkish sultan, a young maiden being possessed by the devil, or the French king having been struck on the head by one of his nobles. Sometimes the young squire listens to the songs of ballad singers, who recite similar news to old popular tunes, or, what is still more welcome, satirical verses on some neighbour, which the singer has been paid to propagate far and wide through the country. The reading which gives most pleasure at home, is either some astrological absurdity, such as a prophecy of old Wilhelm Friese or Gottfried Phyllers, or a description of the funeral festival of the Emperor Charles V. at Augsburg; besides these, theological writings find their way into the castle.

This life, which in spite of all its excitement is so meagre and monotonous, is sometimes varied by the discovery of a murdered man in the fields, or by some old woman of the village being accused of witchcraft. These incidents give rise to judicial proceedings, in the first case tardy and of little interest, in the latter fierce and bloodthirsty.

There are other annoyances in these times from which the landed proprietor is seldom free,—lawsuits and many difficulties. His father had sought to obtain money for the payment of his debts on the highway in his breastplate and

saddle, and thus revenged himself for his injured rights. But now a new age has begun, and law asserts its supremacy over the self-will and independence of individuals; it is however an uncertain, dilatory, distorted law, which overlooks the powerful, and too often favours the wealthy. The young squire still rides his charger, armed with lance and pistol, but he is no longer eager to obtain fame and booty in war. The foot-soldier with pike and musket, and light-horseman of the town have outstripped him. Even at the tournament he prefers running at the ring; and if perchance he should encounter in the lists any person of distinction, he finds it more advantageous to allow himself to be unhorsed, than to contend manfully.

The condition of his peasantry is wretched: they have sunk from freemen to slaves; the rent they have to pay in labour, corn, and money, swallows up their earnings, yet he benefits little by it. The roads being bad and unsafe, it is impossible to export his produce: he is just able to keep himself and his household, for his income is small; everything has become dear; the new gold which has been brought to Europe from America is amassed in the great commercial towns, and is of little advantage to him, and he is unable to maintain the state suitable to his position.

He holds obstinately to all he considers his right, and supports or resists his feudal lord according to his personal advantage; occasionally he follows him to the Imperial Diet. But in the Provincial States, he eagerly resists the impost of new taxes; he has no real love of his country, and only feels himself German in opposition to Italians and Spaniards, whom he hates; but looks with a selfish interest on France, whose King burns cursed Calvinists and engages German Lutherans at high salaries. The province in which he lives has no political unity; the sovereignty of his feudal lord is no longer a firm edifice, and his attachment is therefore only

occasional. His egotism alone is firm and lasting, a miserable hateful egotism, which has scarce power to excite him to deeds of daring, not even to bind him to others of his own class. Rarely does the feeling of his own social position ennoble his conversation or actions; his education and knowledge of the world are not greater than those of a horsedealer of the present day.

A century has passed, it is the year 1659—ten years since the conclusion of the great German war. The walls of the old castles have been shattered, foreign soldiers have encamped within them, whose fires have blackened the ruins, and whose fury has emptied the granaries and destroyed all the household goods. The squire has now erected a new building with the stones of the old one; it is a bare house, with thick walls, and without ornament; the windows look on a miserable village, which is only partly built, and on a field which, for the first time for many years, is prepared for cultivation; the flock of sheep has been replenished, but there are no horses, and the peasants have learned to plough with oxen. The owner of the house has no longer to provide for the horses of troopers and knights; a coach stands in a hovel,—a kind of lumbering chest on leather straps, but nevertheless the pride of the family. The house is surrounded by walls and moats with drawbridges; massive locks and strong iron work defend the entrances, for the country is still insecure. Gipsies and bands of marauders lurk in the neighbourhood, and the daily conversation is of robberies and horrible murders. There is great regularity both in house and village, and strict order is kept by the squire amongst his children, servants, and retainers; but many wild figures may be still seen about the court-yard,—disbanded soldiers who have taken service as messengers, foresters, halberdiers, &c. The village school is in sad decay, but the squire's children receive instruction from a poor scholar. The squire wears a wig with

flowing curls; instead of the knightly sword, a slender rapier hangs at his side; in society his movements and conversation are stiff and formal; the townspeople call him your honour, and his daughter has become "fraulein" and "damoiselle;" the lady of the house wears a bunch of keys at her side; she is great in receipts and superstitious remedies, and her repose is troubled by ghostly apparitions in the old tower of the castle. When a visitor approaches, the spinning-wheel is hidden, an embroidered dress is quickly put on, the scanty family treasures of silver goblets and tankards laid out on the sideboard, a groom, who is just capable of making a bow, is hastily put into livery, and perfumes are burnt in the room. The young squire when he visits appears as a gallant à la mode,—in lace coat and wig, and pays the most fulsome compliments to the lady of the house; he is her most devoted slave, he extols the daughter as a heart-enslaver, and declares that she is quite angelic in her appearance; but these finely turned compliments are bad sauce to coarse manners, and are generally interspersed with stable language and oaths. When conversation begins to flow more freely, it is directed by preference to subjects which are no longer ambiguous, and women listen, not with the naïveté of former times, but with secret pleasure, to the boldness of such language, for it is the fashion to relate improper anecdotes, and by enigmatical questions to produce a pretty affected embarrassment in the ladies. But even such conversation soon wearies, and the wine begins to circulate, the hilarity becomes noisy, and they finish by getting very drunk, after the old German fashion. They smoke clay pipes, and cavaliers of high breeding take snuff from silver boxes. The chase is again the amusement of the country gentleman: he tries to exterminate the wolves, which during the late war have become numerous and insolent; he exhibits rifles among his hunting gear, but no longer mounts his steed as an armed knight; his armour is rusty, his

independence is gone, war is carried on by the soldiers of the Prince, and he appears at court only as the obsequious servant of his illustrious lord.

He is still firm in his faith, and adheres to the rites of the Church; but he holds in contempt the theological controversies of the clergy, and does not object to holding intercourse with unbelievers, though he prefers Jesuits to zealous sectarians. The pastor of his village is poor and devout, and from living amongst lawless men, has lost much of his priestly pride; he strives to support himself by agriculture, and considers it an honour to dine at the squire's table, and has in return to laugh at his patron's jokes, and retail the news of the day. When it is a fête day at the castle he presents a pompous poem, in which he calls on Venus, the Muses and Graces, to celebrate in Olympus the birthday of the lady of the house. On such days there is music at the castle, and the viola da gamba is the fashionable instrument. Once a week the newspaper is brought to the castle, from thence it is sent to the parsonage, then to the schoolmaster and forester: the chief reading besides this consists of tedious novels and histories of adventures, or anecdotes of ghostly apparitions and discoveries of treasure; sometimes also dissertations on the phenomena of nature, the first glimmering of a more intellectual literature. The squire interests himself in politics; he distrusts Sweden, and abhors the regicide tendencies of England, but admires everything French, and whosoever can give him news of Paris is a welcome guest. He attends the Diet, but it is only for the sake of maintaining the privileges of his order; he lounges in antechambers, and by bribery endeavours to secure for his relations some appointment about the court. He unwillingly allows his son to study law, with the hope that he may, as royal counsellor, advance the interests of his family; in short, he looks upon the court and the government as wine

vats to be tapped, so as to afford him a good draught. Germany is to him a mere geographical spot, which he neither loves nor hates; his family or his order are all that he serves or cares for, and if one abstracts from him his high pretensions, and compares the remains of the kernel with the men of our own time, we should find more sense and rectitude in the stubborn head of a corporation of the smallest town than in him.

Again a century has passed, a time of little energy or national strength, and yet great changes have taken place. The year 1759 is in the youth of our grandfathers; numberless remembrances cling to our hearts; it will be sufficient to recall a few. The squire's house has no longer a bare front: a porch has been added, supported by stone pillars; the staircase is ornamented with vases; over the hall door a rudely carved angel holds the family arms emblazoned on a spiral shell. On one side of the building lies the farm-yard, on the other the garden, laid out with trim beech hedges and obelisks of yew. The old whitewashed walls are almost all covered with plaster-of-paris, and some are highly ornamented. There is an abundance of household furniture beautifully carved in oak or walnut; near the ancient family portraits hang modern pastil pictures, amongst them perhaps the daughter of the house as a shepherdess with a crook in her hand. In the apartments of the lady of the house there is a porcelain table with coloured tankards, small cups, pug-dogs, and Cupids of this newly discovered material. Propriety reigns everywhere with a strict stern rule; women and servants speak low, children kiss their parents' hands, the master of the house calls his wife "ma chère," and uses other French phrases. The hair is powdered, and the ladies wear stiff gowns and high head-dresses; violent emotions or strong passions seldom disturb the stiff formality of their carriage or the tranquillity of the house.

The squire has become economist, and looks a little after the farming; he tries by selecting choice breeds to improve the wool of his flocks, and raises carefully the new bulb called the potato, which is to be a source of unfailing nourishment to man and beast. The mode of life is quiet, simple, and formal. The mother shakes her head about Gellert's 'Life of the Swedish Countess;' the daughter is delighted with Kleist's 'Spring,' and sings to the harpsichord of violets and lambs; and the father carries in his pocket the 'Songs of a Grenadier.' Coffee is placed before the visitors, and on high holidays chocolate makes its appearance. Everything is managed by government officials, and much is required of the country gentleman, who has to pay taxes without being consulted: he is a person of more consideration than the citizen, but is now far removed from the prince. The great noble looks with contempt on him, and it is well for him if he does not feel the weight of his stick: the officials of the capital interfere with his farming; they order him to dig a drain, to build a mill, even to plant mulberry-trees, and send him the eggs of silkworms, insisting upon his rearing them. It is a weary time; the third, or Seven years', war is raging between the king and emperor; the squire is walking about his room, wringing his hands and weeping. How is it that this hard man has so completely lost his composure? The letter on the table has informed him that his son, an officer in the king's army, has come unscathed out of the fight at Cunnersdorf; why then does he weep and wring his hands? His King is in distress; the state to which he belongs is in danger of destruction, and it is for this that he grieves. He is greater, richer, and better than any of his ancestors, for he has a fatherland; the training of his generation is rough, manners coarse, and government despotic; his knowledge of the world is not greater than that of a subordinate official of the present day, but

this feeling within him, either in life or death, makes him a man.

Life in every period of the German past was much rougher than now; but it is not the hardships of individuals which make the old time appear so strange to us, it is that the whole mode of life, in every thought and feeling, is so essentially different. The reason of this difference is, that at all periods of the past the mind of the individual was less free and more subordinate to the spirit of the nation; we may see this especially in the middle ages, but it may still be observed in the last century.

There was no such thing as public opinion. The individual submitted his conscience to the approbation of those with whom he lived; he committed to them his honour, interests, and safety, and only felt that he existed as a member of the society, thus rendering the necessity of union more urgent. How strikingly this tendency of the old times was exemplified in the clubs of Hanseatic stations! The constraint within their closed walls was almost monkish. Every word and gesture at the dinner-table was regulated, and this rule was maintained by severe punishments. The soldiers who roamed about together in troops from all parts of Germany, made laws for themselves, by which they kept the strictest discipline, each being accuser and judge of the other. Upon a sea voyage the passengers selected from amongst themselves a magistrate, judge, and police-officer, who declared the law, imposed fines, and awarded even bodily punishment; and if at the conclusion of the journey any individual wished to free himself from this control, he had to take an oath that he would not revenge himself for any annoyance or injury he might have suffered under the ship's law; and it was the same with pilgrimages to the Holy Land, especially where it was question of any dangerous enterprise. For instance, when, in the year 1535, five-and-twenty men from Amberg under-

took to explore the cavern of the "awful" mountains, their first act at the entrance to the caverns was to choose two leaders, and take an oath of obedience to stand by one another in life or death.

The same feature is to be found amongst the artists of the middle ages: thus did the life of individuals first find its full expression, in association with others.

One peculiar charm which we find in the national character of those early ages, is the union of a strong love of freedom with a spirit of obedience. To this characteristic of the old times may be added another. All, from the emperor to the wandering beggar, from their birth to their death, from morning till night, were fenced in by customs, forms, and ceremonies. A wonderful creative genius produced endless pictures and symbols, by which everything on earth was idealized. By these means was expressed the way in which the people understood their relations with God, and the right direction of all human energy; there were also many mysterious rituals which served as means of defence against the supposed influence of unearthly powers. Even in law mimic and figurative proceedings were laid down. Whoever sought revenge before a court of justice for the murder of a relative, had everything as to garments and gestures, the very words of the accusation, and even their complaints, prescribed to them. Every transfer of property, every investiture and contract, had its significant forms and precise words, on which its legality depended. The knights were summoned to the lists by the herald; the bride was claimed and the guests invited to the wedding by fixed forms of speech; it was considered of importance which foot was placed first on the ground in the morning, which shoe was first put on, and what stranger was first met on going out; also, how the bread was laid on the table at each meal, and where the salt-cellar was placed. All that concerned the body, the

cutting of the hair, baths, and bleeding, had their appointed time and appropriate regulations. When the agriculturist turned up the first clod, when he brought in the last sheaf, leaving a truss of corn in the field, in short, all the incidents of labour had their peculiar usages; there were customs for every important day of the year, and they abounded at every festival. Many relics of these remain to our day; we maintain some for our amusement, but most of them appear to us useless, senseless, and superstitious.

Many of these practices had been derived in Germany from the heathen faith and ancient laws and customs. The Church of the middle ages followed in the same track, idealizing life. The services became more frequent, the ceremonials more artificial. In the same way that it had sanctified the great epochs of life by the mystery of its sacraments, it tried, rivalling the heathen traditions, to influence even the trifling actions of every-day life. It consecrated fountains and animals, and professed that it could stop the effusion of blood and turn away the enemy's shot by its blessing. Its endeavours to make the spiritual perceptible to the senses of the multitude, produced many proverbs and symbolical actings, which gave rise to the dramas of the middle ages. But whilst it thus met the imaginative tendencies of the people, its own spiritual and moral character was injured by all these outward observances; and when Luther accused the Church of thirty-seven errors, from the sale of indulgences, to the consecrated salt, and the baptism of bells with their two hundred godfathers, he was not in a position to perceive that the old Church had given growth to these excrescences, by having yielded too much to the imaginative disposition of the German popular mind.

The artisans liked to reproduce the formulas of their religion and guilds for their amusement: dialogue and gesture were interchanged, and thus dramatic representations

arose. The initiated and best informed of every class became known by this; they had an opportunity of showing their nature under the traditional form. In such a way every young nation tries to represent life, and among the Germans, this inclination, together with the love of mystery, worked most powerfully in the same direction. It gave much opportunity for dramatic acting, though it was a peculiarly undramatic period in the life of the people, for words and characteristic gestures do not flow from the inward man; they come with imposing power from external circumstances, leading, forming, and restraining the individual.

Such union of order and discipline belongs to the epic time of the people.

How the German mind outgrew these bonds we shall learn from the following stories of the olden time. In the course of four centuries the great change was accomplished—a powerful action of the mind brought freedom in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, and a fearful political catastrophe brought destruction in the seventeenth.* After a long death-like sleep the modern spirit of the people awoke in the eighteenth century.

* The Thirty years' war.

PICTURES OF GERMAN LIFE.

CHAPTER I.

SCENES FROM THE HUSSITE WAR.

(ABOUT 1425.)

AMONG the events of the thirteenth century, the wonderfully rapid colonization of the Sclave country east of the Elbe has never been sufficiently appreciated. In the course of one century a numerous body of German emigrants of all classes, almost as many as now go to America, spread themselves over a large tract of country, established hundreds of cities and villages, and united it for the most part firmly to Germany. Nearly the whole of the eastern part of Prussia extends over a portion of the territory that was thus colonized.

The time however of this outpouring of national strength was not the heroic period of Germany. The enthusiasm of the Crusades, the splendour of the Hohenstaufen, the short reign of German chivalry, and the greatest elevation of German art, were at the end of the twelfth and beginning of the thirteenth century, whereas the colonization of the Sclave frontier was carried on with most energy towards the close of it. This was the period when Neumark and Prussia were conquered, and Lausitz, Mecklenburg, Pomerania, Rugen, and Silesia colonized. But there was a striking difference in the case of Silesia; for whilst in the other Sclave countries the people were crushed by the iron hand of the conqueror, and were compelled to adopt German habits of life, Silesia became

the centre of a quiet, peaceful colonization, which spread itself far and wide over the frontier towards the east.

How powerful a passion the love of wandering became in the German people at this period, is a point we will not attempt to enter upon. The expeditions of the Hohenstaufens into Italy, and still more the Crusades, had roused and excited the masses, who became restless and eager for foreign adventure; and the life of the peaceful labourer in Germany was full of danger, indeed almost insupportable. Pious monks, enterprising nobles, even princely brides were to be seen knocking at the doors of their peasantry, and trying to induce the young labourers to follow them to Poland. But little is known concerning this emigration; we do not even know from what province the great stream of Silesian wanderers flowed. There are grounds for thinking that most of them came from Magdeburg, Thuringia, and perhaps Franconia. There is no mention of it in the ancient manuscripts or chronicles; the only evidence concerning it might perhaps be found in the Silesian and Thuringian dialects, but even these have not been sufficiently investigated. We have however more knowledge as to who invited the Germans into the country of the Oder. It was the Sclavonian dukes of the Piasten family, who were then rulers of the country.

At the end of the twelfth century a race of ancient Polish princes resided on their paternal inheritance in Silesia; inferior to these were numerous Sclave nobles, and below them again a much oppressed and enslaved people. The country was thinly populated, and poor both in capital and labour. The heights of the Riesenberge and the plains of the Oder were clothed with wood; between them stretched out miles of desolate heath. Herds of wild boars laired in the swamps, bears picked the wild honey from the hollow trunks of the trees, and the elks fed on the branches of the pine; the beaver made its home beside the rivers, the fish eagle hovered about the

ponds, and above him soared the noble falcon. The beaver and falcon were more valuable in the eyes of the princes than their serfs. The peasants looked from their miserable huts with horror on the lords of the water and air, for the preservation of which they had to pay exorbitant penalties. What the earth yielded freely they had to collect for their rigorous masters and the Church. They had to pay tribute from the water and the heath of fish and honey, and heavy imposts on their arable land, sheaves of corn, grain and money; and a certain amount of service was required of them. The greater part were serfs; few were free. And not only the peasants, but also the artisans and tradesmen of all kinds lived in every gradation of servitude, ground down by oppression without hope or pleasure in their work. The Sclave cities only differed from the villages in being a larger collection of bare huts, surrounded by a moat and wooden palisades, and usually situated in the vicinity of a nobleman's castle, under whose protection they lived. In peaceable times markets were held in the towns. Even till the end of the twelfth century the merchants often made their payments, as in Poland, with the tails of martins and skins of squirrels instead of money. But the Silesian mines were already being worked; they yielded silver and gold, copper and lead, and mining, which was considered the nobleman's right, was carried on actively. Mints were erected in all the great market towns, and, as in Poland, the coinage was changed three times a year; and the princes derived some of their income from tolls on the market-places, butchers' stalls, and public-houses.

Such was the country that was then ruled by the royal Piasten families under the Polish sovereignty, which, however, was often disputed, and sometimes entirely thrown off. A great dissimilarity might however be discerned in the different branches of the family. The Piastens of Upper Silesia

united themselves closely with Poland, and kept up the Sclave habits in their country, so that even at the present day a Sclave population is to be found there; but the rulers of Lower Silesia adhered to the Germans. It was their policy to marry the daughters of the German princes: they set the highest value upon everything German, and German manners were introduced into the court; their children were sent to travel in Germany, and often brought up there, so that in the beginning of the thirteenth century, the Piasten family was held in great consideration throughout that country; they sought for knighthood from their relations in the west, and out of courtesy to them dressed their followers in their colours. They knighted their own nobles with the German straight sword, instead of using the crooked Sclave sabre; they preferred getting drunk on malmsey and Rhine wines, instead of the old mead. The German dances were in great request among the ladies of the court.

In this way a numerous German nobility was established in the country, for these courtiers or adventurers and their relations soon became landed proprietors, and the Sclavonian institution of the Castellan was replaced by the German feudal tenure. But an influx of priests and monks tended still more to the promotion of German habits; a stream of them poured incessantly from the west into the half-civilized country. Monasteries, cloisters, and other pious establishments sprang up rapidly, and became as it were the strongholds of German life; for the brotherhoods of the west sent their best and most distinguished members, and continued to furnish them with learning, books, and spiritual energy. The princes, nobles, and clergy soon became aware of the difference between German and Sclave labour; under the latter, large tracts of country yielded little produce, except wood from the forest and honey from the heath. The landed proprietors therefore, with due regard to their own

interests, introduced everywhere German labour. Thus in Silesia the great truth first dawned upon men, on which rests the whole system of modern life, that the labour of free men, can alone give stability to a nation and make it powerful and prosperous. The landed proprietors gave up the greater part of the claims which, according to the Polish law, they had upon men who dwelt on their property, and which were so exorbitant that they derived but little benefit from them. The princes granted the inhabitants as a favour, the right of founding cities and villages in accordance with German law, that is to say, free communities, and this privilege was eagerly sought after, especially by the ecclesiastical bodies, such as Cistertians, Augustines, &c.

A regular method was pursued in founding these communities; but the fate of the villages was very different from that of the cities in the latter part of the middle ages. In the cities, as the body politic continually gained fresh strength, their rights and independence increased; the burgesses acquired by purchase the mayoralty, with its rights and jurisdiction; whilst, on the other hand, the villages were unable to protect themselves from the exactions of the landed proprietors and the burdens laid upon them by their princes; they lost much of their freedom, and many rights they had possessed at their foundation in the thirteenth century were only restored to them in the beginning of this present one.

It was thus that after the beginning of the thirteenth century a new German race sprang up with a surprising rapidity, bordering on the Oder, between the Riesenberge and the plains of Poland. The emigration continued for a considerable period, and the quiet struggle between the German and Polish races lasted long after the former had gained the predominance; indeed, in some districts it has not yet ceased. But for the most part the pliant Sclave race of Silesia peaceably adopted the new customs, as it was very advantageous

to put themselves under German law. And thus the new race showed in its dialect, manners, and education a new phase of the German popular character which one may perceive has arisen from the union of the German and Sclave races.

The people who thus sprang up were not destined to an easy life, and it required all the excitability they derived from the Sclaves, together with the higher capacity they inherited from the Germans, to preserve them from annihilation. Driven in like a wedge between Bohemia and Poland quite to the vicinity of Hungary, they contended with all these nations, dispensing blows and receiving them from their stronger neighbours. They were never able to attain to the independence of a united people. However strong particular communities and confederations became when it was a question of external enemies, the Silesians were almost always divided.

In the fifteenth century the country was visited by that terrible scourge the Hussite war. It is in that fearful time, when the fanatical warriors of the chalice burnt the Silesian villages and cloisters, and threw everything ecclesiastical into the flames, when the land was devastated for nearly a century by the horrors of war, that the peculiar Silesian character may be traced in contradistinction to that of the races dwelling in the adjoining country.

Whilst in the regions adjoining the Oder, and still farther off by the shores of the Baltic, the German race, proud of their recent conquest over the Sclaves, desired to improve themselves by union with Germany, a great Sclave population had arisen in the middle of the German states, the toughest and most stable of all that family: it was firmly incorporated in the Empire, and had long been under the influence of German culture. Prague in the beginning of the fifteenth century might have passed for a German city, for not only in its laws and commerce, but also in science and

art it exhibited all the vigour and independence of German life. About 1289 the King of Bohemia rode as a German elector to the election of the Emperor, and waved the golden glass at the coronation; the Bohemian minstrels and chroniclers wrote in the Swabian language and style, and Bohemian artists painted pictures of saints and windows for the German churches. Under the Luxemburgers Bohemia became the centre of the empire. The Bohemian throne was adorned with the German Imperial eagle and crown, and the flower of Germany's youth flocked to the many-turreted Moldavian city, in order to win in the first German university a nobler patent of nobility than the sword could give. It seemed then for a considerable period as if this fine compact Sclave country, lying with its mountain ramparts in the midst of Germany like a gigantic fortress, was likely to become the kernel of a great united empire, spreading far beyond the Rhine on the west, and to the Vistula on the east, or even perhaps to the swamps of the Theis. But just at this time an energetic reaction of Sclave popular feeling was roused in Bohemia against the Germans, and a long struggle ensued which fearfully shook the political, religious, and social life of Germany, rent the unity of the Roman Catholic Church, weakened the empire and threw it into confusion, depopulated large districts by a war full of cruelty, and amidst the flames of burning cities and the wailing of millions, gave the death-blow to the Holy Roman Empire of the middle ages. It was the peculiar destiny of Germany that this great struggle should first break out among the teachers and scholars in the halls of the universities, and that the funeral pile of a Bohemian professor should give a new direction to the policy of German princes and people.

The auto-da-fé of Huss did not appear to the Germans a very striking or blamable occurrence; people in those days were hastily condemned to death, and there hardly passed a year

that the torch was not laid to the stake in every large city. However great the grief and indignation of the national party of Bohemia might be at these proceedings, the wild fanaticism of the people was first roused by another and greater crime of the reckless Emperor Sigismund, who, at the head of the orthodox German fanatics, began the strife by the great massacre in 1420; this outrage gave the Bohemians the strength of despair, and was the beginning of the wars which raged between the Germans and the Sclaves to the end of that century. Even after dissensions had broken out amongst the Bohemians themselves, and after the death of Georg von Podiebrad, feuds continued, and predatory bands spread themselves over the neighbouring lands, the people and nobility of Bohemia as well as those of the suffering frontier lands became lawless, and a hatred of races, less passionate but more savage and more enduring, took the place of fanaticism.

No land suffered more from the terrors of the Hussite time than Silesia, and it must be confessed that the Silesians showed to less advantage in this century than at any other period of their history; by the division of their country they were politically weak, and quite unfitted to withstand by their own strength the attacks of powerful enemies; when danger approached a feeling of the helplessness of their position came over them and disheartened them; but whenever they could breathe more freely, they became overbearing and full of high-flown plans which generally ended in nothing. As neighbours they were bitter enemies of the Bohemians, and from hatred to them, zealous in their orthodoxy; they were actively engaged in the first disgraceful devastation of Bohemia, and thus, by breach of faith, brought down on themselves the vengeance of the Bohemians. As in the Roman time the truth of a Carthaginian was a byword, so now in Silesia was that of a Bohemian; but the Silesians had no right to reproach the Bohemians with breach of faith. Their

dangerous position did not make them more careful, and they allowed their possessions and cities to be destroyed from the want of timely succour; they were always irritating their enemies and causing fresh attacks by their insolent witticisms and small perfidies. Their vigour and elasticity, however, were most enduring; as often as the Bohemians burnt down their cities and villages, they rebuilt them, and patched up whatever would hold together; they never tired of irritating the heretical Girsik, as they called Georg von Podiebrad.* If, however, they were in need of his assistance, they tried to appease him by a present of a hundred oxen. After a time, however, their hatred became more manly; they took up arms and fought him valiantly; and when at last he sank into the grave, they had the satisfaction of feeling that they had embittered the life and thwarted the ambitious plans of this determined character by their perpetual opposition.

It is the beginning of this unhappy period which is described in the following narrative. It is taken from the report of a merchant in Bolkenhain,† named Martin, the fragment of his notes which we possess, published by Heinrick Hoffman (in Scriptores rerum Lusaticarum I., 1839).

"In the year of our Lord 1425, the Hussites appeared one Saturday evening before the town of Wünschelburg. On Sunday, about the time of vespers, they made breaches in the walls, and by their overwhelming force gained an entrance. The people flew to the house of the mayor,‡ which was a

* Georg von Podiebrad, King of Bohemia, died 1471.

† A town of Silesia, near Riesenberge.

‡ The word house, standing alone, denotes a fortified building in the cities of the mayoralty, in the territory of some nobleman; in such cases it was of stone, the walls very thick, but without foundations, and therefore easily undermined; the windows were provided with iron gratings, and a passage ran under the roof within the walls; sometimes there was a large empty hall between the upper floor and the roof, in the walls of which loop-holes of different kinds were made for arrows, or at a later period for fire-arms, and in the fifteenth century, for light guns. These houses,

high stone building. When all the men and women had arrived there, they set fire to the city from the mayor's house, and thought thereby to save themselves; but the Bohemians waited till the fire had burnt out, then rushed in a powerful body against the stone house, endeavouring to storm and undermine it. Then followed a parley: the mayor let himself down to the Hussites by means of a coarse tilt,* that he might negotiate with them whether the citizens should be allowed to go free. He was so long absent in the town that the people began greatly to fear, especially the pastor of the town, who was godfather to the mayor; he called out to them, asking whether the mayor was still below, requiring him to show and report himself, and come back to them; whereupon the mayor returned to the house and was again drawn up. When he had come up, his godfather the pastor asked how it had gone with him, and whether he had obtained from the enemy freedom for himself and his chaplain. Then spake the mayor: 'No, godfather; they give no mercy to priests!' Then the pastor and his chaplain were sore troubled, and said, 'How miserably you abandon and betray me, be God Almighty your judge. When aforetime I wished to fly, you bade me remain with you, saying you would abide by me for good or for evil, even unto death; and you said, Shall the shepherd fly from his sheep? And now, alack, evil is the day, the sheep fly from the shepherd.' Then spake the women and the citizens' wives to him, weeping, 'We will disguise you and your chaplains, and will bring you down with us safely.' Then spoke the pastor Herr Megerlein, 'That,

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especially when situated in the country, were often surrounded by an outer wall, which also enclosed the farm buildings. They were often inhabited by many families of noble descent all crowded together, some were husbandmen, others freebooters, all however had a strong feeling of aristocratic privileges.

* A linen covering, such as would be spread over the wooden hoops of a waggon.

please God, will I never do. I must not disavow my office and dignity, for I am a priest and not a woman; but look to it well, you men; see in what a pitiful way you deliver me over to death to save yourselves.' No one heeded these complaints; but the two chaplains allowed themselves to be disguised, and carried children on their shoulders—not so the pastor.

"Whilst they thus held converse together, the mayor agreed with the citizens on what terms they would surrender. They then went down, one after the other, and the Bohemians and Hussites were there in front of the building, and made prisoners of them all; they allowed only the women and children to go free. But many of the women, maidens, and children had been in such fear that they had taken refuge in the cellars; so when the fire reached them they were suffocated and perished. Now when all in the house had surrendered, there remained only the pastor, with a few journeymen and artisans who had been unable to purchase their liberty, and who feared death and imprisonment; these the pastor exhorted as follows: 'Dear companions, look well after your necks, and be firm, for if they make you prisoners they will torment and martyrize you.' Then they replied they would do as he advised. But when they saw that the citizens had all surrendered, great fear came over them, and they went down and submitted themselves; but the pastor remained there with an old village priest to the last. Then the Hussites went up to them and brought them down, and led them into the midst of the army and the multitude. Then Master Ambrosius, a heretic of Grätz, being present, spoke to these gentlemen in Latin: 'Pastor, wilt thou gainsay and retract what thou hast preached? thus thou mayst preserve thy life; but if thou wilt not do this, thou must be burnt.' Then answered Herr Megerlein the pastor, and said, 'God forbid that I should deny the truth of our holy Christian faith on account of this short pain. I have taught

and preached the truth at Prague, at Görlitz, and at Grätz,* and for this truth will I gladly die.' Then one of them ran and fetched a truss of straw, which they bound round about his body so that he could not be seen; they then set fire to the straw, and made him, thus surrounded by flames, run and dance about in the midst of the multitude, till he was suffocated. Then they took him as a corpse and threw him into a brewer's vat of boiling water; they also threw in the old village priest, and let them boil therein; thus they were both martyred; but the two chaplains of whom I have before spoken, came out with the women concealed in women's clothes, and the child that one of these priests bore on his arm began to weep and to cry after its mother, and the priest tried to comfort and quiet it. So the Hussites discovered by the voice that it was a man, and one of them took the veil off him; then he let fall the child, took to flight, and ran with all his might; they followed after and killed him. The other came away with the women and children. This happened at Wünschelburg.

"1429. Soon after this the Hussites returned home, but remained there scarcely six weeks; they called out for another campaign, collected again in great strength, and passed into the land of Meissen. The Meisseners, however, were strong in the field, with others such as Brunswickers, Saxons, and people from the marshes, also some from the Imperial cities. The Hussites entered the country with fire and sword, killing and taking prisoners and living lawlessly. Now when the Hussites had advanced to where a large army of Meisseners and people from the Imperial cities were collected together, they encamped opposite to them, and threw up a barricade of waggons. When the armies were thus lying opposite each other they exchanged letters. The Meisseners wrote thus:—'Oh! you apostates from the faith, and cursed heretics, we

* König's 'Grätz in Bohemia.'

shall, God willing, fight you to-morrow, and make you food for the dogs.' To which the Hussites thus replied:—'Oh! you hounds, we shall, God willing, make you food for the dogs, only wait for us to-morrow.' When it was still quite early on the following morning, the Hussites prepared themselves for the fight; they first heard mass, than ate and drank their fill, and when they moved forward to begin the fight, they received intelligence that the Meisseners had fled. When they heard this, they hastened onward and chased them two whole days. When they found they could not catch them, they deliberated, and dividing themselves spread all over the country, burning, killing, and making prisoners, and entering the towns from which the people had retired.

"1443. The country armed and prepared itself, and raised a troop of four hundred horse. It was known that the Bohemians and Hussites intended making an inroad upon the country, therefore the States encamped themselves some miles from Schweidnitz by Bögendorf, in order to watch the enemy, as they knew not at what point they would enter. But Hein von Czirnan had a presentiment that they would come to Bolkenhain (where he had settled), as did indeed happen; therefore he sent a horseman in all haste to Bolkenhain, to inform the burgomaster, and beg him to set a strong and vigilant watch, as he had certain intelligence that the enemy would enter the country in that quarter. The burgomaster sent warning to the villagers, but Hein von Czirnan's messenger arriving only in the evening, the watch not being well established in the city, the enemy appeared on the walls at the dawn of morning; for they had approached the city early in the evening and concealed themselves behind the hills and among the rocks, and had in the night quite at their leisure prepared ladders. The ladders were short, each of four rundles, so that four of these ladders could hardly reach up the wall; but the first piece of ladder had in front

a little wheel; when this was placed, not being fixed, it advanced up the wall. The other ladders were so contrived that one fitted into the other, and fastened together by an iron band. With such cunning and malice had they so early set to work against us. They had placed these same ladders in the night by the walls where the city and hill were highest, the ladders were so broad and wide that two of the enemy could mount at a time. As now at daybreak they had placed many of the ladders, they began to ascend four at once, but when they arrived at the top of the wall they found no passage on it towards the city, and were obliged for some distance to slide and creep along till they came to a watch-house, where they found some steps; so, alas! they came upon us in the city. And when in this way many of them had assembled, they began to cry and to holloa out most terribly, like devils. This took place the last Thursday before Bartlemy-tide. When we heard this terrible noise and tumult, we were woefully frightened, and every one that was able fled to the towers of the gate, church, or any other tower that was accessible; but we could not get into the stronghold, as the enemy had surrounded it, and whoever attempted to enter it was slain. As the people of the city thus concealed themselves, the Hussites went in great troops about the town; some rushed to the churches, others to the best houses; about eight came to my house and forced themselves up into the shop, and placed two of their number with naked swords at the door, and let no one enter the house till they had plundered and divided the whole of my shop and goods. My wife was at that time in the midst of her confinement, God be merciful to her, and she had in her room many valuable things, such as her bed-linen and her clothes; they treated her however with such respect, that no one entered her room. But two of them who were well known to her, and to whom she had shown great kindness, went to the door of her

room, told her how they pitied her, and brought her secretly a coverlet and bed-cover, and said, 'Good woman, they will soon set fire to the city, therefore lose no time in being carried to the cellar with all that you desire to save, for we shall be off immediately.' When they had pillaged all the houses they would gladly have left the town, but could not, for the inhabitants who had taken refuge in the towers and gate-houses, threw down stones upon them, so that they could not pass through the gates, however much they wished it. At last they found an old gate which for many years had been walled up; this they broke open, and carried through it all their plunder, with which they loaded their waggons, and intended to return to Bohemia; they fired the city, and marched off to Landshut. When the troops of the provincial states assembled at Bögendorf beheld such a great smoke and fire, they said to one another, 'It is indeed at Bolkenhain, or in its neighbourhood;' then they started off at full speed for Landshut, and overtook their enemies. When therefore the Bohemians and Hussites began to retrace their steps, they perceived a great host of our town-people coming towards them over the Galgenberg; so they in great fear took to flight. Then our people fell upon them, and the men who had charge of the waggons loaded with our goods, abandoned them and fled for refuge into the woods; thus we deprived them of their plunder, and made many prisoners, both horse and foot, who were distributed among the cities." —So writes Martin of Bolkenhain.

This endless war ruined German Silesia: the plains lay waste and desolate, and most of the German peasantry in this century of fire and sword sank into a state little removed from that of the Sclave serfs. The smaller cities were burnt down and impoverished, and only a few of the larger ones have since attained any degree of importance. The Silesian nobles became rude and predatory; they learnt from the

Bohemians to steal cattle, to seize merchants and traders, and to levy contributions on the cities. The princes in their endless disputes with one another allied themselves sometimes with the Bohemians, and shared their booty with them; indeed, some of them took pleasure in a wild robber life, carrying it on even in their own country. These deeds of violence and lamentable struggles continued quite into the sixteenth century, till the Reformation gave a new bent to this lively and impressible race, and brought with it new sufferings.

Through all these times the Silesians retained their love of orderly arrangements, even in the most desperate situations. When, for example, in the year 1488, Duke Hans of Sagen, one of the lawless characters who figured in the border wars, imprisoned seven honourable counsellors of his own city, Glogau, in a tower, and starved them to death because they had refused to act contrary to a solemn engagement; these seven martyrs, in a truly German manner, punctually and conscientiously kept a diary of their sufferings, and left in writing, prayers to the Almighty for mercy and a happy death; but it is a truly Silesian and almost modern trait, that the writer of this fearful journal had a certain gloomy pleasure in reflecting on his painful fate, and in the last lines he wrote before his death, he endeavoured to depict the destitution of his situation by mentioning that he had been obliged to use the black of the burnt wick as ink.*

* This journal, as also the whole account of Marcus Kintsch von Zobten, is unfortunately in bad handwriting, and very much defaced; but no one could read the fragment without emotion. There cannot possibly be a more simple or striking description than the following:—"As we are unjustly denied the Holy Sacrament, we hereby testify before all, who hear, see, or read this writing, that we die in the holy Christian faith, innocent of all that has been publicly laid to our charge by our sovereign lord. And in making us suffer, he wrongs us: this we testify before our God, and desire that Duke Hans, our merciless master, may answer for it before the righteous tribunal of God. For every one will observe, that

In the century of the reformation, the Silesians, as might be expected of a people of such quick susceptibilities, were for the most part zealous for the new teaching. They had been bound by strong ties to the old Church, like most of the other races; for it was partly at the call of the Church that their ancestors had come into that country; notwithstanding which, almost the whole people freed themselves from Rome, and manfully ventured life and property for their convictions. And most severely was their constancy tried; for the supreme power, which had been in Polish and Bohemian hands, had now fallen into those of the House of Austria.* Of all the countries under the power of the House of Hapsburg, Silesia is the only one which did not make a sacrifice of the new faith to the iron hand of reaction, but maintained a desperate resistance even into the eighteenth century. These were indeed two most unhappy centuries; the Thirty years' war laid the country waste, and not a third part of the former population escaped from the brutality of the soldiers, or from pestilence, or famine. But just at this time, when the whole of Germany had become one vast burial-ground,

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had he any just ground of complaint or accusation against us, he would not have condemned us so cruelly in a dark corner; had he brought us in the light of day before the people, his violence would have been apparent. As God Almighty, on account of our sins, has brought this upon us, we will accept it, and suffer patiently, and beg Him of his mercy to give us a happy end. Amen. Written in great distress and affliction."

"Be it known, good people, that we died more from thirst than hunger."

"I, Hans Keppel, have written this, amidst all my distress and suffering, and have my ink from the black of the burnt wick of the light that is burning above. What God will further do with me, depends on his grace and mercy. But if they give us no more food, we shall not last long. May God help and support us. Amen. Hactenus Keppel."

On the day that Keppel wrote this, two of them died; and he and the others later. This diary is given most accurately in 'Stenzel Script. Rer. Siles. iv.

* In 1526.

in which not even the loud wail of sorrow was heard, the genius of Silesia, as the representative of Germany, entered on the only domain in which advance was possible. Whilst they were still exchanging blows with the Imperial soldiers, they took pleasure in poetry and songs. Already the delicate and polished writings of the vapid Opitz gave pleasure amidst the coarse language of the camp; but truly refreshing to the heart was the short humorous laugh of Logau, at a period when nothing was to be seen save sad or angry faces. The whole of the educated Silesians were eager to sympathize with Opitz, Logau, Gryphius, and Günther, and to vie with them in making heroic verses. Their songs have few charms for us, but we must always feel thankful to them that they had the power of giving expression to the ideal feelings of Germany. It was a great thing to be able to show at such a time, when the coarse and the commonplace overlaid the German life, that there was still something beautiful on earth, and a more intellectual enjoyment than could be found in dissolute revelry, and also that behind the grey and colourless sky which overspread the land, there was another world, full of brilliant colours, and of nobler and more refined feelings.

But whilst the songs of the Silesian "Swans and Nightingales" were held in honour by the other German races, and the fame of the Silesian poets rose high, the worldly position of the Silesians themselves was lamentable. The Thirty years' war was followed by a century of persecution and oppression, which so diminished their energies, that at last it appeared as if they would fall into the same condition as that in which they had found the Sclaves,—a death-like apathy, and a future without hope. The Silesians never became utterly downcast, for they took every opportunity of enjoying themselves, but it was only in feasting and revelry. When, however, the misery of the country was at the highest,

the Prussian drum sounded on the frontier from Müncheberg, and the trumpets of the Ziethen hussars pealed along the same roads on which five hundred years before the first song of the German colonists had resounded with the good words, "We come in God's name."

The Germanizing of the country was not thoroughly accomplished till it was conquered by Prussia; it is only since that time that the Silesians have become conscious of being an integral part of the German nation. What was begun by the Sclave Piastens of the thirteenth, was concluded by the German Hohenzollern of the eighteenth, century.

CHAPTER II.

A GERMAN LADY OF THE ROYAL COURT.

(ABOUT 1440.)

MANY incidents may be found in the descriptions of the struggles between the Silesians and Hussites, which are characteristic of the minds and manners of the people in their epic period. We are made sensible of the great dissimilarity between the past and present by the style of Martin's narration. In his scanty yet graphic description he gives us the facts, but makes no reflections on them. The writer undoubtedly feels how noble and manly was the death of the Pastor Megerlein; but he does not consider it necessary, and, indeed, seems to want the facility and confidence requisite, to give expression to his judgment.

Decisions hastily taken were on the impulses of the moment as hastily given up. The pastor, even when abandoned by his flock, still advised resistance to the young men that remained, though there was little hope of saving himself; but he rejected the proposal of his Hussite friend, and met death like a man. Little value was set upon human life: hard hearted and cruel, the people murdered each other without compunction; yet the infuriated Bohemians kept respectfully out of the sick woman's room, and the plunderers with touching zeal requited past kindness. We find unbridled egotism together with heroic self-denial, rude levity with the deepest religious convictions: the minds of individuals moved in a narrow circle, but with firmness and decision.

An insight into the mental struggles of the fifteenth century may be supplied by another narrative, in which the life and feelings of a clever and strong-minded woman are made known. The circle in which she moved was the court of the German emperor's daughter. Few of our court officials are aware, how much their office has increased in comfort, honour, and decorum since the days of their predecessors, at whose heads the Emperor Wenzel threw his boots, or on whom Margaret Maltash used to inflict blows with her clenched fist. It was necessary for the men and women of a court in former centuries to have strong nerves and good health, to bear heat and cold, to endure in winter the draughts of badly constructed dwellings, and in summer whole days of riding on rough hacks: men had to drink deep and yet keep sober longer than their worthy masters, if they would not be blackened with coals, and trodden under foot by them and other drunken princely guests; the women of the court had to jest with crowds of drunken men with rough manners, or to have their nights' rest disturbed by the clashing of naked swords, or by the cries of an excited multitude. It actually happened once at the Imperial court, that there was no money in the chest for the purchase of new shoes, and frequently the honest citizens declined to furnish the court with the necessary supplies of bread and meat. Most of the great courts led a wandering life, and on their journeys, bad inns, worse roads, and scanty fare were by no means their greatest discomforts: the roads were unsafe, and the reception at the end of the journey was often doubtful.

The scenes we are about to portray are of a Hungarian court, but the royal family and the narrator are German. It is the court of Queen Elizabeth, daughter of the Emperor Sigismund, widow of Albrecht of Austria, king of Hungary, who died in the year 1439. The German Imperial race of Luxemburg was, after Charles IV., the least worthy of renown of all who have ruled over central Europe, and the Emperor Sigismund was one of the

worst of his race. His daughter Elizabeth suffered under the curse of her house: it was her fate to throw Hungary into confusion and weakness; but as she must be judged from history, it appears she was somewhat better than her father or her reprobate mother: she had a feeling of her own dignity, and was, unlike her parents, a person of distinguished manners. This did not hinder her committing, for political purposes, unworthy actions, which every age has stigmatized as mean; but she attached people to her by that fascination of manner which often takes the place of better qualities.

It was thus that one of her attendants, Helen Kottenner, was devoted to her with the most unshaken fidelity; she was bed-chamberwoman and governess to the young princess, a child of four years old, and at the same time she was confidante and counsellor of her mistress. Her ardent loyalty and motherly love for the little king Ladislaus made her the most zealous partisan of his family. She secretly stole for her sovereign the Hungarian crown, and she carried the little Ladislaus through the swamps of Hungary and the rebellious magnates to his coronation, and became his instructress when fate separated him from his mother. It was remarkable that this woman, in a stirring time, when writing was troublesome and difficult even to men, recorded the important events of her life and her share in politics in the shape of a memoir. Our surprise at so unusual a circumstance increases, when we examine closely the fragment of her memoirs which is preserved to us. Her narrative is strikingly detailed, clear, and graphic.

There is no doubt that the fragment is genuine: it was published at Leipzig, 1846, with some explanatory remarks by Stephen Endlisher, from the manuscript still preserved in the Imperial Library at Vienna (No. 2920), under the title, 'From the Memoirs of Helen Kottenner, 1439, 1440.' The principal event recorded is the theft of the Hungarian

crown, by which the coronation of the child Ladislaus was effected.

To enable the reader to understand this, we must mention that up to the present time a mysterious importance has been attached by the Hungarians to the crown of the Holy Stephen, "*die heilige*," without which no one could become rightful King of Hungary; and this mysterious importance has, as is well known, added many romantic adventures to the long and sorrowful history of this crown. When King Albrecht died, his widow Elizabeth had not given birth to the heir who was to secure the succession of the throne of Hungary. Amid the fierce and egotistical quarrels of the nobles who then decided the fate of the country, two large parties may be distinguished,—the national and the German. The national party was desirous of giving the throne to the King Wladislaus of Poland, whilst the Germans sought every means of preserving it to the royal family of Germany. Helen Kottenner writes as follows:—

"Her highness the noble Queen came to reside at Plintenburg,* and many Hungarian lords with her. These went down to the vaults and brought up from thence a chest in which was kept the holy crown, which they took out with its case: there were many seals to this, which they broke open, and looked to see that it was all right. I was present. Then they placed the holy crown in a small chest. This was standing near a bed in which lay the noble Queen, about to be confined, and in the same room with her were two maidens, one called Barbara, the daughter of a Hungarian lord, the other called Ironacherin, and there was a wax taper for a night-light, as is the custom amongst princesses. One of these maidens got up in the night, and upset the light without perceiving it; and a fire broke out in the room, and was burning

* The famous royal castle of Vissegrad on a bend of the Danube four leagues north of Buda—Pesth.

so near the chest that it was singed, and a hole as large as a hand's breadth was burnt in a blue velvet cushion that lay over the chest. Now observe this wonder: the King who was to wear the holy crown was yet within his mother's womb, and they were scarcely two fathoms apart from the chest, and the evil one would gladly have injured them by the fire; but God was their protector, and caused the Queen to awake at the right time. I was then with the young princess. Then came the maidens and bade me quickly rise up, as there was fire in the chamber wherein lay my honoured lady. I was sore afraid, rose up hastily, and went into the room, which was full of smoke: having extinguished the fire, I let in fresh air to clear away the smoke, so that the noble Queen might be able to remain there. In the morning the Hungarian lords waited on my honoured lady. Her highness told them what had happened in the night, and how nearly both she and the holy crown had been burnt. Then the lords were much amazed, and they advised that the holy crown should be replaced in its chest, and carried again down to the vault from whence it had been taken; which was done at once. The door was sealed again as before, but with fewer seals. And the Hungarian lords desired that the castle might be given over to her cousin, Lassla Wan von Gara,* which was also done. Herr Lassla Wan took possession of the castle, and placed it under the superintendence of a Burgrave.

"After all this had happened, the noble widow, my honoured lady, departed for Ofen, in great anxiety of mind, because the Hungarian lords wished her to take another husband; and the King of Poland was the one whom her cousin Lassla Wan was desirous she should choose. This, however, she would not do, as her doctors had assured her she would bear a son: she hoped that this might prove true, but not having any certainty thereof, she was undecided how to act. Then

* Ban Ladislaus von Gara was cousin to Queen Elizabeth.

the noble Queen had begun to consider and devise how she could get the holy crown from the Hungarian lords. These Hungarian lords would have been glad for the confinement of the noble Queen to have taken place at the Plintenburg; but that did not please her highness, and she would not return to the castle; for having weighed the matter well, she had reason to fear that were she there, she and her child might be forcibly detained; still less could she think of going there now, as she was endeavouring to obtain possession of the holy crown. The noble Queen had taken her youngest daughter, Princess Elizabeth, with her from the castle, as also myself and two young maidens, and left all the others there. Every one was astonished that her highness should leave the remainder of the court up at the castle; the reason was known only to God, her highness, and myself.

"The noble Queen went with her youngest daughter, Princess Elizabeth, to Komorn. Here Count Ulric von Eily* came to visit her highness,—a faithful friend, with whom she consulted by what means she could bring away the holy crown from the Plintenburg. Then came my honoured lady to me, desiring that I should undertake it, as there was no one else she could trust, or who knew so well the locality. This sorely troubled me; for it was a dangerous venture for me and my little children, and I turned it over in my mind what I should do, for I had no one to take counsel of but God alone; and I thought if I did it not, and evil arose therefrom, I should be guilty before God and the world. So I consented to risk my life on this difficult undertaking, but desired to have some one to help me. Then I was asked whom I should consider fit for this: I proposed a Croat whom I thought faithfully devoted to my lady. He was called into secret council, and we laid before him what we desired of him: the man was so terrified that he changed colour, and became as one, half

* He was cousin to the queen and Ladislaus von Gara.

dead: he would not consent, and went forthwith to the stable for his horse. I know not whether it came to pass through his own awkwardness, or if it was the will of God, but an account was received at court that he had had a bad fall from his horse, and as soon as he recovered he made the best of his way to Croatia; so the plan was delayed, and my honoured lady was very sorrowful that one who was so weak hearted should know of the affair, and I also was in great anxiety.

"When the time came that the Almighty had ordained that this great work should be done, He sent us a Hungarian who was willing to undertake to obtain the holy crown; his name was the . . . . *; he set about it in a wise and manly manner. We arranged what we should require, and took certain keys and two files. This man who was about to venture his life—as I was mine—in this affair, put on a black velvet dressing-gown and a pair of felt shoes, and in each shoe he placed a file, and he hid the keys under his dress. I took my honoured lady's little seal and the keys of the front door; at the side of the door there was a chain and hook; we had before we left put on a lock, so as to prevent any one else from putting another. When we were ready, my honoured lady sent forward a messenger to the Plintenburg, to let the Burgrave and the maidens know that the latter were to prepare themselves to join her highness at Komorn, as soon as the carriage arrived. When the carriage which was to be sent for the maidens, and also the sledge which was to convey me and my confederate were ready, two Hungarian noblemen were directed to accompany me. We proceeded, and information was given to the Burgrave, that I had arrived for the maidens. He and the other courtiers were surprised that I had left my young mistress, because she was so little, and they all knew well that I was rarely allowed to do so. The

* The name is destroyed in the old manuscript.

Burgrave was ill, and had intended to place his bed near the first door of the place where the holy crown was kept; but God ordained that his illness should increase, and he was unable to sleep there, and he could not place servants there, it being in the women's apartment; therefore he placed a cloth over the padlock, which we had placed on the chain, and sealed it up.

"When we arrived at the Plintenburg, the maidens were right glad to find they were to rejoin my honoured lady: they immediately made preparations, and had a trunk made for their clothes; this occupied a long time, even up to the eighth hour. My confederate came also into the apartment of the women, and jested with the maidens. Now there was a little heap of fire-wood lying near the stove, under which he hid the files; but the servants who waited on the maidens observed this, and began to whisper among themselves. I heard them, and forthwith told him; this frightened him so much that he changed colour, but he took the files away and concealed them elsewhere, and said to me, 'Woman, take care that we have a light.' And I begged of the old woman to give me some tapers, because I had many prayers to say, for it was the first Saturday night after the carnival. I took the tapers and hid them near me. When the maidens and every one else slept, there remained in the small room besides myself, only the old woman whom I had brought with me, who did not know a word of German, nor anything about my business; she had also no knowledge of the house, and lay there sleeping soundly. At the right time my confederate came through the chapel and knocked at the door, which I opened and closed again after him. He had brought a servant with him to help him, who was called by the same Christian name as himself, and was bound to him by oath. I then intended to give him the tapers, but they had disappeared. I was in such terror that I knew not what to do, and the

business had well-nigh miscarried only for want of the lights. Then I bethought me that I would go and quietly awake the woman who had given me the tapers; and I told her the tapers were lost, and I had yet some time to pray; so she gave me more. Then I was glad, and gave them to him with the keys and the little seal of my honoured lady, that he might fasten and seal everything up again. I gave him also the three keys which belonged to the first door. He took off the cloth with the seal of the castle, which had been placed on it by the Burgrave, opened the door and went in with his servant, and worked so hard at the other locks that the noise of the knocking and filing became alarming. But though the watchers and the Burgrave's people were more than usually vigilant that night in the care of the crown, yet Almighty God stopped their ears, so that they did not hear the noise. I however heard it all, and kept watch in great trouble and anxiety. And I devoutly prayed to God and the Holy Virgin that they would support and help me; yet I was in greater anxiety for my soul than for my life, and I prayed to God that He would be merciful to my soul, and let me die at once there, rather than that anything should happen against his will, or that should bring misfortune on my country and people. Whilst I was thus praying, I heard a loud noise and rustling, as if many armed men were at the door through which I had admitted my confederate, and it appeared to me as if they desired to break open the door. In great fear I rose from my knees, and was about to warn him to desist from his work, when it occurred to me to go first to the door, which I did; when I came to the door, the noise was at an end, and no one seemed to be there; then I bethought me that it was a spirit, and went again to my prayers; and I vowed to our dear lady a pilgrimage to Zell* barefooted, and until I could fulfil it, I would every Saturday night forego

* Maria Zell in Styria.

my feather bed, and also as long as I lived would make an especial prayer to the Holy Virgin, thanking her for her favour, and begging her to express my gratitude to our dear Lord Jesus Christ, for the great mercy which out of his compassion He had shown me. Whilst I was still at my prayers, I thought again that there was a great noise and rustling of armour at the other door, which was the special entrance into the women's room; and this frightened me so much that I trembled and perspired all over, and thought it was surely not a spirit, but that they had gone round to this door whilst I was still standing at that of the chapel. I knew not what to do, and listened to find out whether the maidens had heard anything. But I heard no one, then I went slowly down the small stairs through the chamber of the maidens, to the door which was the usual entrance into the women's apartments; when I came to the door there was no one. Then was I glad, and thanked God, and went again to my prayers, and bethought me it was the devil who wished to hinder our business.

"When I had ended my prayer I got up, and determined to go to the vault and see what they were doing: the man met me, and told me to rejoice, as it was all accomplished. They had filed away the locks of the doors, but that on the case was so fast they could not file it, and were obliged to burn the wood. From this arose a great smoke, and I was again in much anxiety lest inquiry should be made about it; but God averted this danger. As we had now got the holy crown we closed the doors again, and fixed on other locks instead of those we had broken, and put on them again the seal of my honoured lady: we made fast the outer door, and replaced on it the cloth with the seal of the castle, as had been done by the Burgrave, and as we had found it. And I threw the file into the privy that was in the women's apartments; and if it were broken open, the file would be found in

evidence of the truth of all this. The holy crown we carried out through the chapel, wherein rest in God the remains of St. Elizabeth; and I, Helen Kottenner, owe to this chapel a priestly garment for the mass, and an altar cloth, which shall be paid by my honoured lord, King Lassla. My confederate took a red velvet cushion which he opened, and taking a portion of the feathers out, placed the holy crown therein, and then sewed it up again.

"In the meanwhile it was almost daylight, the maidens and every one had arisen, and we were to depart: now the maidens had in their service an old woman, who my honoured lady had commanded should have her wages paid, and be left behind, that she might return home to Ofen. When she had received her wages she came to me, and told me that she had seen a curious thing lying before the stove, and did not know what it might be. I was much alarmed at this, for I saw plainly that it was part of the case in which the holy crown had been kept; and I did my best to persuade her not to believe her own eyes; but I went secretly to the stove, and threw the fragments that I found into the fire, that they might be entirely burnt; and I took the woman with me on the journey. Every one was surprised at my doing this; but I said that I intended asking my honoured lady for a benefice at St. Martins at Vienna for her, which I afterwards did.

"When the maidens and the retinue were ready to depart, my confederate took the cushion in which the holy crown was concealed, and commanded his servant to carry it from the house to the sledge on which he and I were to sit. Then the good fellow took the cushion on his shoulders, and threw over it an old cowhide with the tail on, which hung down behind, and every one who saw it began to laugh.

"When we arrived in the market-place we would gladly have had something to eat, but could find nothing except herrings.

When we had eaten a little, and assisted at the usual mass in the Church, the day was far advanced, and we had to go that day from the Plintenburg to Komorn, which was full twelve German miles off. On mounting the sledge I took great care not to sit on the corner of the cushion in which the holy crown was concealed, and thanked God Almighty for all his mercies; yet I often turned round to see if any one followed us; and there was no end to my anxiety, for my thoughts troubled me much.

"On arriving at the inn where we intended to dine, the faithful servant to whom the care of the cushion was intrusted carried it into the chamber, and laid it on a table before me, so that it was under my eye the whole time that we were eating; and before starting, the cushion was replaced. We journeyed onwards, and about dark arrived at the Danube, which was still frozen over, but the ice in some places was very thin. When we were half way across the river the ice gave way under the carriage in which the maidens were, and it was upset; they raised a great cry, for it was so dark they could not see each other. I was in great fear that we, with the holy crown, should be lost in the Danube; but God was our help, so that no one got under the ice, but many things from the carriage fell into the water under the ice. Then I took the Duchess of Silesia and the principal maidens into the sledge with me, and we, with all the others, got safe over the river. When we arrived at the castle of Komorn, my confederate took the cushion with the holy crown, and carried it to a place of safety, and I went to my honoured lady the noble Queen, who received me graciously, and said, 'That with God's help, I had been a good messenger.'

"The noble Queen received me in bed, and told me how she had suffered during the day. Two widow ladies had come from Ofen to her highness, bringing with them two nurses, one was the midwife, the other the wet-nurse; and the latter

had brought her child with her, which was a son, for the wise people think that the milk which comes with a son is better than that which comes with a daughter. These women were to have gone with her highness to Presburg, where she was to have been confined, for according to their reckoning her highness had yet another week to go; but either the reckoning was wrong, or, as I said to the noble Queen, it was God's will: her grace told me that the women from Ofen had given her a bath, after which her pains had come on. I discovered from this that the birth was now approaching. The women from Ofen were staying in the market-place, but we had a midwife with us, called Margaret, who had been sent to my honoured lady by the Countess Hans von Schaumberg, as being particularly good, which she was. Then I said, 'Honoured lady, it seems to me that you will not go to-morrow to Presburg;' so her highness got up and began to prepare herself for the event. Then I sent for the Hungarian housekeeper who was called Aessem Margit, who came immediately, and also the maiden called Ironacherin, and I hastened to call the midwife whom the Countess von Schaumberg had sent. She was in the room with my young lady,* and I said, 'Margaret, rise quickly, for the hour of my honoured lady is come;' the woman being heavy with sleep answered, 'By the holy cross, if the child is born to-night we shall hardly go to Presburg to-morrow;' and she would not get up. The contest between us appeared to me so long that I hastened back to my honoured lady, lest anything should go wrong, as those who were with her did not understand such things; and she inquired, 'Where is Margaret?' and I gave her the foolish answer of the woman; and her highness said, 'Go again quickly, and bid her come, for this is no jesting matter.' I hurried back in great anger, and brought the woman with me; and in less than half an hour after she came to my honoured lady, Almighty God sent us a

* The princess Elizabeth.

young King. The same hour that the holy crown came from the Plintenburg to Komorn, the King Lassla was born. The midwife was sharp-witted, and exclaimed, 'Honoured lady, grant me my wish, and I will tell you what I have in my arms.' The noble Queen answered, 'Yes, dear mother;' and the nurse said, 'I have a young King in my arms.' This made the noble Queen very happy: she raised her hands to God, and thanked Him for his mercy. When she had been arranged comfortably in her bed, and no one was with her save I alone, I knelt down and said to the Queen, 'Honoured lady, your Highness must thank God as long as you live for his great mercy, and for the miracle which He has wrought in bringing the crown and the King together in the same hour.' The noble Queen replied, 'It is indeed a great miracle of God Almighty, the like of which has never happened before.'

"When the noble and faithful Count Ulric von Eily heard that a King and friend was born to him, who was both his lord and cousin, he was overjoyed, as were also the Croats, and all the lords and attendants on the court. The noble Count von Eily had bonfires made, and they had a procession on the water with torches, and amused themselves till after midnight. Early in the morning they sent for the Bishop of Gran to come and christen the young King: he came, accompanied by the pastor of Ofen, Master Franz. And my honoured lady desired that I should be godmother; but I answered, 'Honoured madam, I am bound to obey your Highness always, but I beg of you to take the Aessem Margit instead of me,' which her Highness did. When the noble King was to be baptized, we took off the black dress from the young princess, which she had worn for the great and dear prince, King Albrecht, and put on her a golden dress woven with red; and the maidens were all gaily dressed to the honour and praise of God, who had given an hereditary King to the people and country.

"Not long after, there came certain intelligence that the King of Poland was approaching, and had designs upon Ofen, which proved true. It became therefore necessary to make secret and hasty preparations for the coronation; and my honoured lady sent to Ofen to get cloth of gold for the coronation dress of the little King Lassla; but this took so long a time that we feared it would be too late, for the coronation must take place on a high festival, and Pentecost, which was the first, was near at hand, so that it was necessary to make haste. Now there was a rich and beautiful vestment for the mass which had belonged to the Emperor Sigismund; it was red and gold, with silver spots worked on it; this was cut up and formed into the first dress of the young King that he was to wear with the holy crown. I sewed together the small pieces, the surplice and the humeral, the stole and the banner, the gloves and the shoes; and I was obliged to make these secretly in the chapel with bolted doors.

"In the evening, when every one had gone to rest, my honoured lady sent for me to come to her immediately; this made me fear that something had gone wrong. The noble Queen's thoughts had been wandering to and fro, and she said to me, 'What would you advise? our affairs are not going on well; they desire to stop us on our way; where shall we conceal the holy crown? It will be a great misfortune if it falls into the hands of the enemy.' I stepped aside for a little while, wishing to reflect and to pray to the mother of all mercy to intercede with her Son, that we might manage our business so that no evil should accrue from it. Then I returned to the noble Queen and said, 'Honoured lady, with deference to your wisdom, I will advise what seems good to me: your Highness knows well that the King is of more importance than the holy crown; let us lay the holy crown in the cradle under the King, so that wherever God leads the King there will the crown be also.' This counsel pleased her Highness, who

answered: 'We will do so, and thus let him take care of the crown himself.' In the morning I took the holy crown and packed it carefully in a cloth, and laid it in the mattress of the cradle, for his Highness did not yet lie on a feather-bed; and laid there also a long spoon, such as we use for mixing the child's pap. This I did to make any one who felt in the cradle, believe that what lay therein was the vessel in which the pap for the noble King was prepared.

"On the Tuesday afternoon before Whitsunday the noble Queen set out with the young King, the noble Count von Eily, the Croatian counts, and the Dukes of Lindbach. A large boat had been prepared for the noble Queen, her son, and daughter; and many good people went on board with them, so that the boat being heavy laden was scarce a hand's breadth above the water: there was much fear and danger, especially as the wind was high; but God took us prosperously over the river. The young King was carried in the cradle by four men, most of them armed, and I myself rode by the side of it. He had not been carried far when he began to cry violently, and would not remain in the cradle; so I descended from my horse and carried him in my arms: and the roads were bad, for there had been much rain; but there was a pious knight there, Herr Hans of Pilach, who conducted me through the swampy ground.

"We went on in great anxiety, for all the peasants had fled from their villages into the wood, and most of them were vassals of the lords who were our enemies; therefore, when we came to the mountains, I dismounted from my horse and took the noble King out of his cradle, and placed him in the carriage, wherein sat the noble Queen and her young daughter Elizabeth; and we women and maidens formed a circle round the noble family, so that if any one fired at the carriage we should receive the shots. And there were many foot-soldiers who went on both sides of the carriage, and searched in the

underwood, lest there should be any enemies there who might injure us. Thus, with God's help, we crossed the mountain without hurt. Then I took the noble King again out of the carriage, and placed him in his cradle, riding by the side of it: we had not gone far when he began again to cry; he would not remain in the cradle or carriage, and the nurse could not quiet him. Then I took him up in my arms and carried him a good bit of the way; the nurse also carried him till we were both tired, when I laid him again in his cradle; thus we continued to change during the whole of our journey. Sometimes it rained so that the noble King was quite wet. I had brought a fur pelisse with me for my own wear, but when the rain was very heavy I covered the cradle with it, till it was wet through, I then had it wrung out, and again covered the cradle with it as long as it was wanted. The wind also was so high that it blew the dust into the cradle, so that the King could hardly open his eyes; and at times it was so hot that he perspired all over, and from that a rash broke out upon him afterwards. It was almost night when we arrived at the inn; and when every one had eaten, the gentlemen placed themselves round the house in which the royal family were, and made a fire, keeping watch all night, as is the custom in the kingdom of Hungary. The next day we journeyed to Weissenburg.

"When we arrived near Weissenburg, Miklosch Weida of the free city rode to meet us, accompanied by full five hundred horse.

"When we went through the marshy ground the young King began again to cry, and would not remain in the cradle or carriage; and I was again obliged to carry his Highness in my arms, till we arrived in the city of Weissenburg. Then the gentlemen sprang from their horses, and formed themselves into a wide circle of armed men, holding naked swords in their hands, and I, Helen Kottenner, had to carry the young King

in the midst of this circle; and Count Bartholomä of Croatia went on one side of me, and another on the other side, to do honour to the noble King; thus we went through the city till we arrived at the inn. This was on Whitsun eve.

"On our arrival my honoured lady sent for the elders of the city; she showed them the holy crown, and gave directions to prepare everything that was meet for the coronation, according to the old usages. And there were certain burghers there, who remembered the coronation of the Emperor Sigismund, having been present at it. On Whitsun morning I got up early, bathed the young King, and dressed him as well as I could; then they carried him to the church, where all the Kings were crowned, and there were many good people there, both ecclesiastics and laymen. When we arrived at the church they carried the young King to the choir, but the door of the choir was closed; the citizens were within, and my honoured lady was outside the door with her son, the noble King. My honoured lady spoke Hungarian with them, and the burghers answered her Highness in the same language: her Highness took the oath instead of her son, for his Highness was only twelve weeks old that day. When all this was accomplished according to the old customs, they opened the door and let in their rightful lord and lady, and all the others who were summoned, both ecclesiastics and laymen. And the young Princess Elizabeth stood up by the organ, that her Highness might not be injured in the throng, as she was only just four years old. When the service was about to begin, I had to raise up the young King that his Highness might be confirmed. Now Miklosch Weida had been appointed to knight the young King, because he was a genuine Hungarian knight. The noble Count von Eily had a sword which was thickly ornamented with silver and gold, and on it was a motto that ran thus: 'Indestructible.' This sword he gave to the young King, that his Highness might be knighted with it. Then I, Helen

Kottenner, raised the young King in my arms, and the knight of the free city took the sword; and he gave the King such a blow that I felt it on my arm. This the noble Queen, who stood near me, remarked, and said to the knight of the free city: 'Istemere nem misertem!' that is to say, 'For God's sake do not hurt him!' to which he replied: 'Nem;' that is to say, 'No,' and laughed. Then the right reverend prelate, the Archbishop of Gran, took the holy oil, and anointed the noble child, King; and the dress of cloth of gold, such as is worn by kings, was put on the noble child; and the archbishop took the holy crown and placed it on his head; and thus he, King Albrecht's son, grandson of the Emperor Sigismund, who throughout all holy Christendom is recognized as King Lassla, was crowned at Weissenburg by the Archbishop of Gran, with the holy crown, on Whitsunday. For there are three laws in the kingdom of Hungary which must not be departed from, as without them no king is deemed legally crowned. One of these is, that a king of Hungary must be crowned with the holy crown; another that it must be done by the Archbishop of Gran; and the third, that it shall take place at Weissenburg. When the archbishop placed the crown on the head of the noble King Lassla, he held his head quite upright with the strength of a child of a year old, which is seldom to be seen in children of twelve weeks. After the noble King, seated in my arms, had been crowned at the altar of St. Stephen, I carried him up a small staircase to a high gallery, according to custom, and the prescribed ritual for the festival was read; but there being no golden cloth for the King to sit on, after the old usage, I took for the purpose a red and gold cover lined with ermine from his cradle; and whilst the noble King was held upon the golden cloth, Count Ulric von Eily held the crown over his head during the chanting of the office.

"The noble King had little pleasure in his coronation, for he wept aloud, so that all in church heard him; and the common

people were astonished, and said, 'It was not the voice of a child of twelve weeks; it might be taken for that of a child of a year old, which, however, he was not. Then knighthood was conferred by Miklosch Weida on behalf of the noble King Lassla. When the office was completed I carried the noble King down again, and laid him in the cradle, for he was very tired from sitting so long upright. Then he was borne to St. Peter's church, where I was again obliged to take him out of his cradle and place him on a chair, as it is the custom for every king when crowned to be seated there. Again I carried his Highness down and laid him in his cradle; and he was taken from St. Peter's church, followed by his noble family on foot, back to the inn. The only one who rode was Count von Eily, for he had to hold the holy crown over the head of the noble King, that every one might see it was the holy crown which had been placed on the head of the holy St. Stephen and other Hungarian Kings. Count Bartholomä carried the orb, and the Duke von Lindbach the sceptre; a legate's staff was borne before the noble King, because he did not hold any part of Hungary on feudal tenure from the holy Roman Empire; and the sword with which his Highness had been knighted was also carried before him, and pence were scattered among the people. The noble Queen was so humble and showed such respect to her son, that I, poor woman, had to walk before her, next to the noble King, because I had held his Highness in my arms at the anointing and coronation. When the noble King had arrived at the inn, he was put to rest, as his Highness was very tired. The lords and all others went away, and the noble Queen remained alone with her son. Then I knelt down before her, and reminded her of the service which I had rendered to her Highness and the noble King; and also to her other children and members of the royal family. Thereupon the noble Queen gave me her hand and said, 'Rise up, and if please God our affairs prosper, I will

exalt you and your whole race. You have well deserved it, for you have done for me and my children what I myself could not have done.' Then I inclined myself humbly, and thanked her Highness for her kind encouragement."

Thus far Helen Kottenner. History tells us in what consternation the party of King Wladislaus of Poland was placed by the robbery of the crown, and also how the crown itself was mortgaged by the Queen to the Emperor Frederick III., but of the after life of Helen Kottenner we know nothing.

What interests us most in this narrative is the night scene in which the holy crown of Hungary is purloined, and the mental struggles of a strong female character. But these inward struggles and scruples of conscience assume to the daughter of the fifteenth century a palpable form: they become to her an outward reality that mysteriously assails her. Her soul is not tormented with thoughts alone that accuse and excuse each other, but with delusive appearances that strike her with terror.

This activity of the senses, which clothes with an appearance of outward life all that rises in the soul, of the fearful and incomprehensible, is generally and peculiarly characteristic of the early life of every people. The souls of individuals are not sufficiently free to enable them to understand the inward struggles of their own minds: they begin by contending against what torments them, as if it were an outward form or enemy. Such were the noble struggles of Luther; and when the incomparable English poet of the sixteenth century caused his tragic hero to struggle with the apparitions of murdered men, and with the dagger which was the implement of his crime, this conception, which we consider as a highly poetical and spiritual creation, had a far deeper truth for him and his spectators.

CHAPTER III.

THE TRAVELLING STUDENT.

(1509, AND FOLLOWING YEARS.)

THE fifteenth century passed away. To us Germans it appears an introduction to the great events of the following one,—a period of earnest but imperfect striving towards improvement. The excitement of the masses in the great half-Sclave population of the Roman empire had brought death and destruction over the German provinces, and the fanaticism of the Hussites had appeared to exhaust itself in the burning ruins of hundreds of cities and villages; but the same feeling had stirred the hearts of two generations, and in the next century the flame again blazed forth, more powerful and unquenchable, a pillar of fire to all Europe. The house of Luxemburg had passed away; its last heirs had mortgaged the Hungarian crown to the Austrian Hapsburgers, and bequeathed to them their claims to the wide and insecure acquisitions of their race. In the next century Charles V. made them the greatest dynasty of the world. It was a century of strife and reckless egotism, and on all sides arose knightly associations and confederacies; but it was also a time when the German mind, having become more practical in its tendencies, arrived at the greatest of all new discoveries, —the art of printing; when, in spite of fighting on the highways and bloody quarrels within the cities, commerce and trade began to flourish; when citizens and peasants acquired the habits of regular soldiers; when the German merchant esta-

blished his supremacy on the northern seas, while the Italian navigator pressed on through the mists of boundless oceans, to unknown regions of the earth; finally, it was the time in which the Alpine mules bore, together with the spices of the East and the papal bulls, the manuscripts of a foreign nation, by means of which a new enlightenment was spread over Germany,—the early dawn of modern life.

With the sixteenth century began the greatest spiritual movement that ever roused a nation. This century has for ever impressed its seal on the spirit and temper of the German people. A wonderful time, in which a great nation anxiously yearning after its God, sought peace for the burdened soul, and a moral and mental aim for a life hitherto so poor and joyless.

This effort of the popular mind to found a new collective life by a deep apprehension of the eternal, produced a political development in Germany which is strikingly distinct from that of other nations. The whole powers of the nation were so engrossed in this passionate struggle, that it sank into a state of extreme exhaustion: the political concentration of Germany was delayed for centuries; most fearful civil wars were followed by a deathlike lassitude; German was divided from German, and a deep chasm was formed between the new and the middle ages. The result was, that a large portion of the German people, who might carry back their history in uninterrupted continuity up to the struggles of Arius and Arminus, now regard the time of the Hohenstaufen, and even the imperial government of the first Maximilian, as a dark tradition; for their state polity, their rights, and their municipal laws are hardly as old as those of the free states of North America. The oldest of the proud nations that arose from the ruins of the Roman empire, is now in many respects the youngest member of the European family. But whatever may have been the influence of the sixteenth century on the

political formation of the fatherland, every German should look back to it with respect, for we owe to it all which now is our hope and pride; our power of self-sacrifice, our morality and freedom of mind, an irresistible impulse for truth, our art, and our unrivalled system of science, and lastly, the great obligation which our ancestors have imposed upon us of accomplishing what they failed in. It is especially now, in the midst of a political struggle for German national life, that it would be useful to us to consider how this struggle began three centuries and a half ago.

Whoever attempts to examine the German mind at the beginning of the sixteenth century, will observe a secret restlessness, something like that of migratory birds when spring approaches; this indefinite impulse reproduced frequently the old German love of wandering. Many causes combined to make the poor restless and desirous of novelty. The number of vagrants, young and old, such as pedlers, pilgrims, beggars, and travelling students, was very great; many of the adventurers went to France, but the greater part to Italy.

Wonderful reports came from distant lands. Beyond the Mediterranean, in the countries contiguous to Jerusalem (which was annually visited by the German pilgrims), a new race and a new and obnoxious religion had spread itself. Every pilgrim who came from the south related in the hostelries tales of the warlike power of the Turks, of their polygamy, of the Christian children whom they stole and brought up as slaves, and of danger to the Christian islands and seaports. On the other hand the fancy was led from the terrors of endless seas to the new gold lands,—countries like paradise, coloured tribes who knew nothing of God, and endless booty and dominion for believing Christians. To this was added the news from Italy itself,—how discontented the inhabitants were with the pope, how wanton the simony, and how wicked the princes of the Church.

And those who brought these tidings into the city and country were no longer timid traders or poor pilgrims, but sunburnt hardy troopers, bold in aspect, and well accoutred; children of neighbours, and trustworthy men, who had accompanied the Emperor as mercenaries to Italy, where they had fought with Italians, Spaniards, and Swiss, and now returned home with all kinds of booty, gold in their purses, and the golden chains of knighthood round their necks. The youths of the village gazed with respect on the warrior who thrust his halberd into the ground before the inn, and took possession of the rooms for himself and his guests, as if he were a nobleman or a prince; for he, the peasant's son, had trodden under foot Italian knights, and dipped deep into the money coffers of Italian princes; had obtained full dispensation from the Pope for his deeds, and, it was even whispered, a secret blessing which made him invulnerable. The lower orders began for the first time to have an idea of their own strength and capacities; they felt that they also were men; the hunting-spear hung in their huts, and they carried the long knife in their belt. But what was their position at home? The use of their hands and their teams was required by the landed nobleman for his fields; to him belonged the forest and the game within it, and the fish in their waters; and when the peasant died, his heir was obliged to give up the best of his herd, or its worth in money. In every feud in which the nobleman was engaged they were the victims: the enemy's soldiers fell upon their cattle, and they themselves were shot down with arrows, and imprisoned in dark dungeons till they were able to pay ransom. The Church also sought after their sheaves and concealed money. Dishonest, cunning, and voluptuous were the deans, who rode through their villages, falcon on hand, with troopers and damsels; the priests, whom the peasants could neither choose nor dismiss, seduced their wives, or lived scandalously at home.

The mendicant monks forced their way into their kitchens, and demanded the smoked meats from their chimneys, and the eggs from their baskets. All the communities throughout Southern Germany were in a state of silent fermentation, and already, at the end of the fifteenth century, local risings had begun, the forerunners of the Peasant war.

But more wonderful still was the influence of the new art, through which the poorest might acquire knowledge and learning. The method of multiplying written words by thousands was discovered on the banks of the Rhine in the middle of the fifteenth century. The printing of patterns by means of wooden blocks had been practised for many centuries, and frequently single pages of writing had in this way been struck off; at last it occurred to a citizen that whole books might be printed with cast metal type. Its first effect was to give intelligence to the industry of the artisan, and a way was thus opened to the people of turning their mental acquirements to profit.

The learning of the middle ages still occupied the professors' chairs at the German universities, but it was without soul, and consisted in dry forms and scholastic subtleties. There was little acquaintance with the ancient languages, Hebrew and Greek were almost unknown; the solid learning of the olden times was taught in bad monkish Latin; the Bible and Fathers of the Church, the Roman historians, institutes and pandects, the Greek text of Aristotle, and the writers upon natural philosophy and medicine, were found only in dusty manuscripts; nothing but the commentators and systematizers of the middle ages were ever expounded or learnt by heart. Such was the state of things in Germany. But in Italy, for more than a century, mental cultivation had begun, from the study of Roman and Greek poets, historians, and philosophers. The men of high intellect on the other side of the Alps rejoiced in the beauty of the Latin language

and poetry, admired the acute logic of Cicero, and regarded with astonishment the powerful life of the Roman people. Their whole literature entwined itself, like the tendrils of a creeper, round the antique stem. It was soon after the invention of printing, and during the war carried on by the Germans in the Peninsula, that this new Humanitarian learning was gradually introduced into Germany. The Latin language, which appeared to the Germans like a new discovery, was industriously studied in the classical schools, and disseminated through the means of manuals. The close attention and long labour necessary in Germany to acquire the foreign grammar, acted as discipline to the mind. Acuteness and memory were strongly exercised; the logical construction of the language was more attended to than the phonetic; the grandeur and wisdom of the subject, more than the beauty and elegance of the style: the German mind required more exercise, therefore the result was more lasting, because the mastery had to be gained over two languages of different roots. A number of earnest teachers first spread the new learning; among these were Jacob Wimpfeling and Alexander Hegius, Crato of Udenheim, Sapidus, and Michael Hilspach. To these may be added the poets Henry Bebel and Conrade Celtes, Ulrich Zasius the lawyer, and others; in close union with them were to be found all the men of powerful talent in Germany; Sebastian Brand, author of Narrenschiffs, and also the great preacher John Geiler of Kaisersberg, although he had been brought up in the scholastic teaching.

They were sometimes led by their knowledge of ancient philosophy into secret speculations upon the being of God, and all were opposed to the corruptions of the Romish Church; but their opposition differed from that of Italy in this respect, that the German mind gave it more elevation. It is true that many of the Humanitarian teachers considered the German

language as barbarous; they Latinized their names, and in their confidential letters took the liberty of calling their countrymen unpolished; they hated the despotic arrogance with which the Romish priests looked down upon them and their nation; yet they did not cease to be good Christians. Besides their unceasing attacks on the vices of the Italian priesthood, they ventured, though with hesitation and caution, upon an historical critique on the foundation of the claims of the Papacy. They were united in bonds of friendship, and formed one large community. Bitterly persecuted by the representatives of the old scholastic school, they nevertheless gained allies everywhere,—in the burgher houses of the Imperial cities, in the courts of the Princes, in the entourage of the Emperor, and even in the cathedral chapters and on the Episcopal thrones.

The mental culture of these men, however, could not keep a lasting hold on German life; its groundwork was too foreign to the real needs of the mental life of the people; its ideal, which it had gathered from antiquity, was too vague and arbitrary; its fantastical occupation with a bygone world, of whose real meaning they knew so little, was not favourable to the development of their character. Some indeed became forerunners in the struggle of faith, but others, offended by the roughness and narrowness of the new teaching, fell back to the old Church which they had before so severely judged. One of this school, the enthusiastic and high-minded Ulrich von Hutten, who was passionately German, and attached to the teaching of Luther, suffered for his devotion to the popular cause.

In the beginning of the century, however, the Humanitarians carried on almost alone the struggle against the oppression under which the nation groaned. They exercised a powerful influence on the minds of the multitude; even what they wrote in Latin was not lost upon them, and the rhymesters of

the cities were never weary of propagating the witticisms and bitter attacks of the Humanitarians in the form of proverbs, jocose stories, and plays.

The desire for learning became powerful amongst the people. Children and half-grown boys rushed from the most distant valleys into the unknown world to seek for knowledge; wherever there was a Latin school established, there the children of the people congregated, often undergoing the greatest sufferings and hardships, demoralized by the uncertainty of their daily life; for though the founders and managers of the schools, or the burghers of the cities, gave these strangers sometimes a roof over their heads, and beds to lie on, they were obliged for the most part to beg for their daily subsistence. Little control was exercised over them; only one thing was strictly enjoined,—that there should be some method in the lawlessness of their life; it was only under appointed forms, and in certain districts of the city, that they were allowed to beg. When the travelling scholar came to a place where there was a Latin school, he was bound to join the association of scholars, that he might not make claims on the benevolence of the inhabitants, to the prejudice of the schoolmaster or of those already there. An organization was formed among these scholars, as was always the case where Germans assembled together in the middle ages, and a code was established, containing many customs and demoralizing laws, with which every one was obliged to comply; besides this there was the rough poetry of an adventurous life, which few could go through without injury to their characters in after life. The younger scholars, called Schützen, were, like the apprentices of artisans, bound to perform the most humiliating offices for their older comrades, the Bacchanten: they had to beg and even to steal for their tyrants, who in return gave them the protection of their strength. It was considered honourable and advantageous for a Bacchant to have many

Schützen, who obtained gifts from the benevolent, on which he lived; but when the rough Bacchant rose to the university, he was paid off for all the tyrannical injustice he had practised towards the younger scholars: he had to lay aside his school dress and rude manners, was received into the distinguished society of students with humiliating ceremonies, and was obliged in his turn to render service and to bear rude jests like a slave. The scholars were perpetually changing their schools, for with many the loitering on the high roads was the main object; their youth was passed in wild roving from school to school, in begging, theft, and dissoluteness. Whilst we rejoice in finding a few individuals who, by strength of mind and ability, rose through all this to intellectual pre-eminence, we must bear in mind how many a pet child died miserably under some hedge, or in the lazar-house of a foreign city, whose youthful minds had looked forward with hope to reaching the same goal.

The instruction in the Latin schools was very deficient, for a book was a rare treasure: the boys had often to copy the text for themselves, and the old grammar of Donat still served as the groundwork by which they learned to read Latin. There was still much useless scholastic pedantry, and what was then admired as elegant Latin, has somewhat of a monkish flavour. But the great teacher Wimpfeling took every opportunity of selecting examples which might excite the boys to honesty, integrity, and the fear of God; he endeavoured to impart not merely the knowledge of forms, or the subtle distinctions of words, but the spirit that flows from the ancients. The mind was to be ennobled; intellect and faith were to be advanced; learning was to act as a preservative against war, to promote peace, the greatness of states, and the reformation of the Catholic Church, for its object was knowledge of the truth.

Some idea of the life of a travelling student has been preserved to us in the description of Thomas Platter, the poor

shepherd boy from Visperthale, in the Valais, later a renowned printer and schoolmaster at Basle; his autobiography has been published by Dr. Fechter, Basle, 1840. In those days no travellers in search of the picturesque had begun to roam in the wild mountain valley from which the Visp rushes towards the Rhone, nor to visit Zermatt, the Matterhorn, and the glaciers of Monte Rosa. The shepherd boy grew up amidst the rocks, with no companions but his goats; his herd straying into a corn-field, or an eagle hovering threateningly above him, his climbing a steep rock, or being punished by his severe master, were the only events of his childhood; how he was cast out into the wide world from his solitude he shall himself relate.

"When I was with the farmer, one of my aunts, named Frances, came to see me; she wished me, she said, to go to my cousin, Herr Anthony Platter, to learn the Scriptures; thus they speak when they want one to go to school. The farmer was not well pleased at this; he told her I should learn nothing: he placed the forefinger of his right hand in the middle of the left, and went on to say, 'The lad will learn about as much, as I can push my finger through there.' This I saw and heard. Then said my aunt: 'Who knows? God has not denied him gifts; he may yet become a pious priest.' So she took me to that gentleman. I was, if I remember right, about nine or ten years old. First it fared ill with me, for he was a choleric man, and I but an unapt peasant lad. He beat me cruelly, and ofttimes dragged me by the ears out of the house, which made me scream like a goat into which the knife had been stuck; so that the neighbours oft talked of him as if he wished to murder me.

"I was not long with him, for just at that time my cousin came, who had been to the schools at Ulm and Munich, in Bavaria; the name of this student was Paulus of Summermatten. My relations had told him of me, and he promised

that he would take me with him to the schools in Germany. When I heard this I fell on my knees, and prayed God Almighty that He would preserve me from the 'Pfaffs,'* who taught me almost nothing and beat me lamentably, for I had learned only to sing a little of the Salve, and to beg for eggs with the other scholars, who were with the Pfaff in the village.

"When Paulus was to begin his wanderings again, I was to go to him at Stalden. Simon, my mother's brother, dwelt at Summermatten, on the road to Stalden: he gave me a gold florin, which I carried in my little hand to Stalden. I looked often on the way to see that I still had it, and gave it to Paulus. Then we departed into the country, and I had to beg for myself, and to give of what I got to my Bacchant Paulus: on account of my simplicity and countrified language, much was given to me. At night going over the Grimsel Mountain we came to an inn; I had never seen a *kachelofen*,† and as the moon shone on the tiles, I imagined it was a great calf: I saw only two tiles shining, which were, I imagined, the eyes. In the morning I saw geese. I had never seen any before, and when they hissed at me I thought they were devils, and would eat me; so I cried out and ran away. At Lucerne I saw the first tiled roofs.

"Afterwards we went to Meissen: it was a long journey for me, as I was not accustomed to travel so far and to obtain food on the road. There were eight or nine of us travelling together; three small Schützen, the others great Bacchanten, as they are called; amongst all these I was the smallest and youngest. When I could not keep up well, my cousin Paulus came behind me with a rod, or little stick, and switched me on my bare legs, for I had no stockings, and bad shoes. I do

* Pfaff, a contemptuous name for a priest.

† A large stove used chiefly in Germany and Switzerland: it was built of brown-glazed tiles cemented together; the door of it was outside the room; it was heated by large logs of wood, and was sometimes large enough to have beds made on it.

not remember all that happened to us on the road. Once when we were talking together on the journey, the Bacchanten said it was the custom in Meissen and Silesia for the scholars to steal geese and ducks, and other such food; and nothing was done to them on that account, if they could escape from those to whom the things belonged. One day, when not far from a village, we saw a large flock of geese, and the herdsman was not with them; then I inquired of my fellow-Schützen when we should be in Meissen; as then I thought I might venture to kill the geese; they answered, 'Now we are there.' So I took a stone, threw it at one of the geese, and hit it on the leg; the others flew away, but the lamed one could not rise. I took another stone, and hit it on the head, so that it fell down. I ran up and caught the goose by the neck, carried it under my coat, and went along the road through the village. Then came the gooseherd running after me, and called aloud in the village, 'The boy has stolen my goose!' I and my fellow-Schützen fled away, and the feet of the goose hung out behind my coat. The peasants came out with spears to throw at us, and ran after us. When I saw that I could not escape with the goose, I let it fall, and sprang out of the road into the bushes; but two of my fellows ran along the street, and were overtaken by two peasants. Then they fell down on their knees, and asked for mercy, as they had done them no harm; and when the peasants saw that it was not they who had killed the goose, they returned to the village, taking the goose with them. But when I saw how they hastened after my fellows, I was in great trouble, and said to myself: 'Ah, my God! I think I have not blessed myself this day.' (For I had been taught to bless myself every morning.) When the peasants returned to the village, they found our Bacchanten in the public-house, for these had gone forward; and the peasants desired that they would pay for the goose: it would have been about two batzen; but I know not whether or no

they paid. When they joined us again, they laughed, and asked how it had happened. I excused myself, as I had imagined it was the custom of the country; to which they said it was not yet the right moment.

"Another time a murderer came to us in the wood, eleven miles on this side of Nuremberg, who wished to play with our Bacchanten, that he might delay us till his fellows joined him; but we had an honest fellow amongst us called Anthony Schallbether, who warned the murderer to leave us, which he did. Now it was so late that we could hardly get to the village; there were very few houses, but there were two taverns. When we came to one of these the murderer was there before us, and others besides, without doubt his comrades; so we would not remain there, and went to the other public-house. As they themselves had already that night had their food, every one was so busy in the house, they would not give anything to us little lads; for we never sat at table to our meals; neither would they take us to a bedroom; but we were obliged to lie in the stable. But when they were taking the bigger ones to their bedroom, Anthony said to the host: 'Host, methinks you have strange guests, and are not much better yourself. I tell you what, place us in safety, or we will treat you in such a way that you will find your house too narrow for you.' When they had taken them to rest (I and the other little boys were lying in the stable without supper), some persons came in the night to their room, perhaps among them the host himself, and would have opened the door; but Anthony had put a screw before the lock inside, placed his bed before the door and struck a light; for he had always wax tapers and a tinder-box by him, and he quickly woke up the other fellows. When the rogues heard that, they made off. In the morning we found neither host nor servants. When they told us boys about it, we were all glad that nothing had happened to us in the stable. After we had

gone from thence about a mile, we met with people, who when they heard where we had passed the night, were surprised that we had not all been murdered; for almost all the villagers were suspected of being murderers.

"Our Bacchanten treated us so badly that some of us told my cousin Paulus we should escape from them; so we went to Dresden; but here there was no good school, and the sleeping apartments for strange scholars were full of lice, so that we heard them at night crawl on the straw. We then left and went on to Breslau: we suffered much from hunger on the road, having nothing for some days to eat but raw onions and salt, or roasted acorns and crabs. Many nights we lay in the open air; for no one would receive us into their houses or at the inns, and often they set the dogs upon us. But when we arrived at Breslau, everything was in abundance; indeed so cheap that we poor scholars overate ourselves, and frequently made ourselves ill. We went at first to the chapter school of the Holy Cross, but when we found that there were some Swiss in the parsonage house at St. Elizabeth, we went there. The city of Breslau has seven parishes, and each its separate school: no scholar ventured to sing in another parish; if he did the cry of 'Ad idem, ad idem,' was raised, and the Schützen collected together and fought. It is said that there were at one time some thousands of Bacchanten and Schützen who all lived on alms; it is also said that some of them who were twenty or thirty years old, or even more, had their Schützen who supported them. I have often of an evening carried home to the school where they lived, for my Bacchanten, five or six meals. People gave to me willingly because I was little, and a Swiss, for they loved the Swiss.

"There I remained for some time, as I was very ill that winter, and they were obliged to take me to the hospital; the scholars had their own especial hospital and doctors, and sixteen hellers a week are given at the town hall for the use of

the sick, which provided for us well. We were well nursed and had good beds, but there were lice therein, beyond belief, as big as hempseed, so that I and others would much rather have lain on the floor than in the beds. It is hardly possible to believe how the scholars and Bacchanten were covered with lice. I have ofttimes, especially in the summer, gone to wash my shirt in the water of the Oder, and hung it on a bush to dry; and in the mean time cleared my coat of the lice, buried the heap, and placed a cross over the spot. In the winter the Schützen used to lie on the hearth in the school; but the Bacchanten lived in small rooms, of which there were some hundreds at St. Elizabeth; but during the summer, when it was hot, we lay in the churchyard, like pigs in straw, on grass which we collected from before the houses of the principal streets, where it was spread on Sundays; but when it rained we ran into the school, and if there was a storm we chanted almost all night the responsoria and other things with the succentor. We often went in summer after supper to the beerhouses to beg for beer: they gave us the strong Polish peasant beer, which, before I was aware of it, made me so drunk that even when within a stone's throw from the school I could not find my way to it. In short, we got sufficient nourishment, but little study.

"In the school of St. Elizabeth, nine bachelors always read together at the same hour in one room, for there were no printed Greek books in the country at that time; the preceptor alone had a printed Terence: what was read, therefore, had first to be dictated, then parsed and construed, and lastly explained; so that the Bacchanten when they went away carried with them large sheets of writing.

"From thence our eight went off again to Dresden, and fell into great want. We determined therefore one day to divide ourselves; some were to look out for geese, some for turnips and onions, and one for a kitchen pot; but we little ones

went to the town of Neumarkt, to get bread and salt, and we were to meet together in the evening outside the town, where we were to camp out, and then cook what we had. There was a well about a stone's throw from the town, near which we wished to pass the night; but when they saw our fire in the town, they began to shoot at us, yet did not hit us. Then we retired behind a bank to a little stream and grove; the big fellows lopped off branches and made a kind of hut, some plucked the geese, of which we had two; others put the heads and feet and the giblets into the pot, in which they had shred the turnips, others made two wooden spits and roasted the meat; when it had become a little brown, we ate it with the turnips. In the night we heard a kind of flapping: we found there was a pond near us which had been drained in the day, and the fish were struggling in the mud; then we took as many of them as we could, in a shirt fastened on a stick, and went away to a village, where we gave some of them to a peasant, that he might cook the others for us in beer.

"Soon after we went again from thence to Ulm, there Paulus took with him another lad called Hildebrand Kalbermatter, son of a Pfaff: he was quite young, and had some cloth given to him, such as is made in that country, for a little coat. When we came to Ulm, Paul desired me to go about with the cloth begging for money to pay for its making up; in this way I got much money, for I was well accustomed to begging in God's name, for the Bacchanten had constantly employed me in this, so that I had hardly ever been taken to school, and not once taught to read. Going thus seldom to the school, and having to give up to the Bacchanten all I got by going round with the cloth, I suffered much from hunger.

"But I must not omit to mention that there was at Ulm a pious widow, who had two grown-up daughters; this widow

had often, when I came in the winter, wrapped up my feet in a warm fur, which she had laid behind the stove on purpose to warm them, and gave me a dish of porridge and sent me home. I was sometimes so hungry that I drove the dogs in the streets away from their bones, and gnawed them; item, searched for the crumbs out of the bag, which I ate. After that we returned again to Munich: there also I had to beg for money to make up the cloth, which nevertheless was not mine. The year following we went once more to Ulm, and I brought the cloth with me, and again begged on account of it; and I remember well that some one said to me, 'Botz Marter! is not the coat made yet? I believe you are employed in knavish work.' We went from thence, and I know not what happened to the cloth, or whether or no the coat was ever made up. One Sunday, when we came to Munich, the Bacchanten had got a lodging, but we three little Schützen had none; we intended therefore to go at night to the corn market, in order to lie on the corn sacks; and certain women were sitting in the street by the salt magazine, who inquired where we were going. When they heard that we had no lodging, a butcher's wife who was near, when she saw that we were Swiss, said to her maid, 'Run and hang up the boiler with the remains of the soup and meat; they shall stay with me over the night; I like all Swiss. I served once at an inn in Innspruck, when the Emperor Maximilian held his court there: the Swiss had much business to arrange with him; and they were so friendly that I shall always be kind to them as long as I live.' The woman gave us good lodging, and plenty to eat and drink. In the morning she said to us, 'If one of you would like to remain with me, I would give him food and lodging.' We were all willing to do so, and inquired which she wished to have: when she had inspected us, as I looked more bold than the others, she took me, and I had nothing to do but to get the

beer, to fetch the meat from the shambles, and to go with her sometimes to the field; but still I had to provide for the Bacchant. This the woman did not like, and said to me, 'Botz Marter! let the Bacchant go, and remain with me; you shall not beg any more.' So for a whole week I did not return to my Bacchant, nor the school; then he came to the house of the butcher's wife, and knocked at the door; and she said to me, 'Your Bacchant is there; say that you are ill.' She let him in, and said to him, 'You are truly a fine gentleman; you should have looked after Thomas, for he has been ill, and is so still.' Then he said to me, 'I am sorry for it, lad: when you can go out again, come to me.' Some time after, one Sunday, I went to vespers, and when they were over, my Bacchant came up to me and said, 'You Schütz, if you do not come to me, I will trample you under foot.' This I determined he should not do, and made up my mind to run away. That Sunday I said to the butcher's wife, 'I will go to the school and wash my shirt.' I dared not tell her of my intention, for I feared she would speak of it. So I left Munich with a sorrowful heart, partly because I was leaving my cousin, with whom I had gone so far (though he had been so hard and unmerciful to me), and also on account of the butcher's wife, who had treated me so kindly. I journeyed on over the river Isar, for I feared if I went to Switzerland, Paulus would follow me, and beat me, as he had often threatened. On the other side of the Isar there is a hill. I seated myself on the top, looked upon the town, and wept bitterly, because I had no longer any one to take an interest in me, and I thought of going to Saltzburg, or Vienna, in Austria. Whilst I was sitting there a peasant came with a waggon, which had carried salt to Munich: he was already drunk, though the sun had only just risen. I begged him to let me sit in it, and I went with him till he unharnessed the horses in order to give them and himself

food; meanwhile I begged through the village, and waiting for him not far from it, fell asleep. When I awoke I again wept bitterly, for I thought the peasant had gone on, and it appeared to me as if I had lost a father. Soon, however, he came, and was still drunk, but called to me to sit in the cart, and asked me where I wished to go; I replied, 'To Saltzburg.' When it was evening, he turned off from the road, and said, 'Get down, there is the road to Saltzburg.' We had gone eight miles that day. I came to a village, and when I got up in the morning everything was white with rime, as if it had snowed, and I had no shoes, only torn stockings, no cap, and a scanty jacket. Thus I travelled to Passau, and intended to get on the Danube and go to Vienna, but when I came to Passau they would not admit me. Then I thought of going to Switzerland, and I asked the guard at the gate the nearest way to Switzerland: he answered by Munich. I said, 'I will not go by Munich, I had rather travel ten miles, or even more, out of the way to avoid it.' Then he pointed out the way by Friesingen. There was a high school there, and I found some Swiss, who inquired of me from whence I came? In the course of a few days Paulus arrived: the Schützen told me that the Bacchant from Munich was looking for me. I ran out of the gate as if he had been behind me, and travelled to Ulm, where I went to the widow's house, who had so kindly warmed my feet, and she received me, and I was to guard the turnips in the field, and did not go to school. Some weeks after, a companion of Paul's came to me, and said, 'Your cousin is here, and is seeking for you.' He had followed me for eighteen miles, as he had lost in me a good provider, I having supported him for some years. When I heard this, although it was night, I ran out of the gate towards Constance. I again wept bitterly, for I was sorry to leave the kind widow.

"I crossed the lake, and arrived at Constance; and as I went over the bridge I saw some of the Swiss peasant girls with their white petticoats. Oh my God, how glad I was! I thought I was in heaven. When I came to Zurich I saw there some people from the Valais, big Bacchanten, to whom I offered my services for getting food, if they in return would teach me; but I learned no more with them than with the others. After some months Paulus sent his Schütz Hildebrand from Munich, to desire me to return to him, and said he would forgive me; but I would not go back, and remained at Zurich, where however I studied little.

"One Antonius Venetz from Visp in the Valais persuaded me to go with him to Strasburg. When we arrived there we found many poor scholars, but no good school; there was however a very good one at Schlettstadt, so we went there. In the city we took a lodging with an old couple, one of whom was stone blind; then we went to my dear preceptor, the late Johannes Sapidus, and begged him to receive us. He asked from whence we came, and when we said out of Switzerland, from the Valais, he answered, 'The peasants there are bad, for they drive all their Bishops out of the country; if, however, you study industriously, I will take little from you, if not, you must pay me, or I will take the coat off your back.' That was the first school in which it appeared to me that things went on well. At that time learning, especially that of languages, was gaining ground—it was the year of the Diet at Worms. Sapidus had once nine hundred students, some of them fine scholars, who afterwards became doctors and men of renown.

"When I came to this school I knew little, could not even read the Donat. Though I was eighteen years old, I was placed among the little children, and looked like a hen amidst her small chickens. One day when Sapidus called over the list of the scholars, he said, 'I find many barbarous names, I must try to Latinize them.' He then called over the

new names: he had turned me into Thomas Platterus, and my fellow, Anthony Venetz into Antonius Venetus, and said, 'Which are the two?' We stood up and he exclaimed, 'Poof! what measly Schützen to have such fine names!' this was partly true, especially of my companion, for I was more accustomed to the change of air and food.

"When we had stayed there from autumn to the following Whitsuntide, a great many fresh scholars arrived, so that there was not sufficient to support us all; and we went off to Solothurn, where there was a tolerably good school, and more food; but we were obliged to be so constantly in church that we lost all our time; therefore we returned home.

"The following spring I went off again with my two brothers. When we took leave of our mother, she wept and said, 'Am I not to be pitied, to have three sons going to lead this miserable life?' It was the only time I ever saw my mother cry, for she was a brave, strong-minded woman, respected by every one as honourable, upright, and pious.

"I came to Zurich, and went to the school of the monastery of our Lady. About this time it was reported that a thoroughly good and learned but severe schoolmaster was coming from Einsiedeln. I seated myself in a corner not far from the schoolmaster's chair, and I thought to myself, in this corner will I study or die. When he (Father Myconius) entered, he said, 'This is a fine school (it had only just been built); but methinks you are a set of ignorant boys: but I will have patience with you, if you will only be industrious.' I knew that if it had cost me my life I could not have declined a word, even of the first declension; but I could repeat the Donat by heart from beginning to end, for when I was in Schlettstadt, Sapidus had a bachelor who plagued the Bacchanten so grievously with the Donat, that I thought it must be such a good book, I had better learn it by heart. I got on well with Father Myconius: he read Terence to us, and we had to conjugate

and decline every word of a whole play; and it often happened that my shirt became quite wet, and my sight seemed to fail me with fear; and yet he had never given me a blow, except once with the back of his hand on my cheek. He read also the Holy Scriptures, and to these readings many of the laity came, for it was the time when the light of the holy Gospel was beginning to dawn. If at any time he was severe with me, he would take me home and give me something to eat, and he liked to hear me relate how I had gone all through Germany, and how it had fared with me.

"Myconius was obliged to go with his pupils to church at the monastery of our Lady, to sing at vespers, matins, and mass, and conduct the chanting. He said to me once, 'Custos (for I was his custos), I would rather hold four lectures than sing one mass. Dear son, if you would sometimes chant the easy masses for me, requiems, and the like, I will requite it to you.' I was well content with this, for I had been accustomed to it, and everything was still regulated in the popish manner. As custos, I had often not enough wood to burn in the school, so I observed which of the laymen who came to it had piles of wood in front of their houses: there I went about midnight and secretly carried off wood to the school. One morning I had no wood; Zwinglius was to preach at the monastery early that morning, and when they were ringing the bells, I said to myself, 'Thou hast no wood, and there are so many images in the church that no one cares about them.' So I went to the nearest altar in the church, and carried off a St. John, and took him to the stove in the school, and said to him, '*Jōgli*, now thou must bend and go into the stove.' When he began to burn, the paint made a great hissing and crackling, and I told him to keep quiet, and said, 'If thou movest, which however thou wilt not do, I will close the door of the stove: thou shalt not get out unless the devil carry thee away.' In the mean time came Myconius' wife;

she was going to hear the sermon in the church, and in passing by the door, said, 'God be with you, my child, have you heated the stove?' I closed the door of the stove, and answered, 'Yes, mother, I have already warmed it;' but I would not tell her how, for she might have tattled about it, and had it been known, it would have cost me my life. Myconius said to me in the course of the lesson, 'Custos, you have had good wood to-day.' When we were beginning to chant the mass, two Pfaffs were disputing together in the church; the one to whom the St. John belonged said to the other, 'You rogue, you have stolen my St. John;' and this dispute they carried on for some time.

"Although it appeared to me that there was something not quite right about Popery, I still intended to become a priest. I wished to be pious, to administer my office faithfully, and to ornament my altar. I prayed much, and fasted more than was good for me. I had also my saints and patrons, and prayed to each for something especial; to our Lady, that she would be my intercessor with her child; to St. Catherine, that she would help me to learning; to St. Barbara, that I might not die without the sacrament; and to St. Peter, that he would open the door of heaven to me; and I wrote down in a little book what prayers I had neglected. When I had leave of absence from the school on Thursdays or Saturdays, I went into a confessional chair in the monastery, and wrote the omitted prayers on a chair, and counted out every sin one after another; then rubbed them out, and thought I had done my duty. I went six times from Zurich with processions to Einsiedeln, and was diligent in confession. I often contended with my associates for the Papacy, till one day M. Ulrich Zwinglius preached on this text from the gospel of St. John:—'I am the good shepherd.' He explained it so forcibly, that I felt as if my hair stood on end; and he showed how God will demand the souls of the lost

sheep at the hands of those shepherds who caused their perdition. I thought, if that is the true meaning, then adieu to priestcraft, I will never be a Pfaff. I continued my studies, began to dispute with my companions, listened assiduously to the sermons and to my preceptor Myconius. There still continued to be mass and images at Zurich."

Thus far Thomas Platter. His struggle in life lasted some time longer: he had to learn rope-making in order to support himself; he studied at night, and when Andreas Kratander, the printer at Basle, had sent him a Plautus, he fastened the separate sheets on the rope by means of a wooden prong, and read whilst he was working. Later he became a corrector of the press, then citizen and printer, and lastly rector of the Latin school at Basle. The unsettled life of his childhood was not without its influence on the character of the man; for however great his capacities, he displayed neither energy nor perseverance in his undertakings.

It was among the thousands who, like the boy Thomas, thronged to the Latin schools, that the new movement won its most zealous followers. These children of the people carried from house to house with unwearied activity their new ideas and information. Many of them never arrived at the university; they endeavoured to support themselves by private tuition, or as correctors of the press. Most of the city, and in later times the village schools were occupied by those who could read Virgil, and understand the bitter humour of the Klagebriefes, *de miseria plebenorum*. So great were their numbers that the reformers soon urged them to learn, however late, some trade, in order to maintain themselves honestly. Many members of guilds in the German cities were qualified to furnish commentaries to the papal bulls, and translate them to their fellow-citizens; and subtle theological questions were eagerly discussed in the drinking-rooms. Great was the influence exercised by these men on

the small circles around them. Some years afterwards they, together with the poor students of divinity who spread themselves as preachers over all Germany, became a great society; and it was these democrats of the new teaching who represented the Pope as antichrist in the popular plays, harangued the armed multitudes of insurgent peasants, and made war on the old Church in printed discourses, popular songs, and coarse dialogues.

In this way they made preparation for what was coming. But however clearly it had been shown by the Humanitarians that the Church had in many places falsified the Holy Scriptures, however humorously they had derided the tool of the Inquisition—the baptized Jew Pfefferkorn, with his pretty little wife—and however zealously the small school teachers had carried among the people the colloquies of Erasmus on fasting, &c., and his work on the education of children, yet it was not their new learning alone that gave birth to the Reformation and the spiritual freedom of Germany. Deeper lay the sources of this mighty stream; it sprang from the foundation of the German mind, and was brought to light by the secret longings of the heart, that it might, by the work of destruction and renovation, transform the life of the nation.

CHAPTER IV.

THE MENTAL STRUGGLES OF A YOUTH, AND HIS ENTRANCE INTO A MONASTERY.

(1510.)

GREAT was the wickedness of the world, heavy the oppression under which the poor suffered, coarse the greed after enjoyment, boundless the covetousness both of ecclesiastics and laymen. Who was there to punish the young nobleman who maltreated the peasants? who to defend the poor citizen against the powerful family unions of the rich counsellors? Hard was the labour of the German peasant from morning till evening, through summer and winter; pestilence was quickly followed by famine and hunger: the whole system of the world seemed in confusion, and earthly life devoid of love. The only hope of deliverance from misery, was in God; before Him all earthly power, whether of Emperor or Pope, was weak and insignificant, and the wisdom of man was transitory as the flower of the field. By his mercy men might be delivered from the miseries of this life, and compensated by eternal happiness for what they had suffered here; but how were they to obtain this mercy? by what virtues could weak men hope to gain the endless treasure of God's favour? Man had been doomed from the time of Adam to will the good and do the evil. Vain were his highest virtues; inherited sin was his curse; and if he obtained mercy from God, it was not by his own merits.*

* For this see the 'Theologia Teütsch,' the best work of the time previous to the Reformation, by an unknown writer of Tanler's school, which was in fact the main source from which Luther drew his opinions; an admirable work even for us.

These were the questions that then struggled within the agonized hearts of men. But from the holy records of Scripture, which had only been a dark tradition to the people, went forth the words; Christ is love. The ruling Church knew little of this love; in it God was kept far from the hearts of men: the image of the Crucified One was concealed behind countless saints, who were all made necessary as intercessors with a wrathful God. But the great craving of the German nature was to find itself in close connection with the Almighty, and the longing for the love of God was unquenchable. But the Pope maintained that he was the only administrator of the inexhaustible merits of Christ; and the Church also taught, that by the intercession of saints for the sins of men, an endless treasure of good works, prayers, fasts, and penances were made available for the blessing of others; and all these treasures were at the disposition of the Pope, who could dispense them to whom he chose, as a deliverance from their sins. Thus, when believers united together in a pious community, the Pope was able to confer on such a brotherhood the privilege of passing over from one to the other, the merits of the saints, the surplus of prayers and masses, as well as of good works done for the Church.

In the year 1530, Luther complained that the number of these communities was countless.* An example will show how rough and miserable their mechanism was, and the "Brotherhood of the Eleven Thousand Virgins," called "St. Ursula's Schifflein," is selected, because the Elector, Frederick the Wise, was one of the founders and brothers. The collection of spiritual treasures given by statute to enable the brotherhood to obtain eternal happiness, amounted to 6,455 masses, 3,550 entire psalters, 200,000 rosaries, 200,000 *Te Deum Laudamus*, 1,600 *Gloria in excelsis Deo*. Besides this, 11,000 prayers for the patroness St. Ursula, and 630 times

* Exhortation to the ecclesiastics collected at the Diet at Augsburg.

11,000 Paternosters and Ave Marias; also 50 times 10,000 Paternosters and Ave Marias for 10,000 knights, &c.; and the whole redeeming power of these treasures was for the benefit of the members of the brotherhood. Many spiritual foundations and private persons had gained to themselves especial merit by their great contributions to the prayer treasures. At the revival of the society, the Elector Frederick had presented a beautiful silver Ursula. A layman was entitled to become a member of the brotherhood if he once in his life had repeated 11,000 Paternosters and Ave Marias: if he repeated daily thirty-two, he gained it in a year, if sixteen, in two, and if eight, in four years: if any one was hindered by marriage, sickness, or business, from completing this number of prayers, he was enabled to enter by having eleven masses read for him; and so on. Yet this brotherhood was one of the best, for the members had not to pay money; it was to be a brotherhood of poor people who wished only to assist each other to heaven by mutual prayer; and we maintain that these brotherhoods were the most spiritual part of the declining Church of the middle ages.

The indulgences, on the other hand, were the foulest spot in its diseased body. The Pope, as administrator of the inexhaustible treasure of the merits of Christ, sold to believers, drafts on this store in exchange for money. It is true that the Church itself had not entirely lost the idea that the Pope could not himself forgive sins, but only remit the penances the Church prescribed; those, however, who held these views, individuals of the university and worthy village priests, were obliged to be careful that their teaching should not come into open collision with the business of the seller of indulgences. For what did the right teaching of their own Church signify to the papists of the sixteenth century? It was money that they craved for their women and children, their relatives, and princely houses. There was a fearful

community of interests between the bishops and the fanatical members of the mendicant orders. Nothing had made Huss and his tenets so insupportable to them as the struggle against the sale of indulgences: the great Wessel had been driven out of Paris into misery for teaching repentance and grace; and it was the sellers of indulgences who caused the venerable Johannes Vesalia to die in the prison of a monastery at Mayence, he who first spoke the noble words, "Why should I believe what I know?"

It is known how prevalent the traffic in indulgences became in Germany in the beginning of the sixteenth century, and how impudently the reckless cheating was carried on. When Tetzel, a well-fed haughty Dominican, rode into a city with his box of indulgences, he was accompanied by a large body of monks and priests: the bells were rung; ecclesiastics and laymen met him, and reverentially conducted him to the church; his great crucifix, with the holes of the nails, and the crown of thorns, was erected in the nave, and sometimes the believers were allowed to see the blood of the Crucified One trickling down the cross. Church banners, on which were the arms of the Pope with the triple crown, were placed by the cross; in front of it the cursed box, strongly clamped with iron, and near these on one side, a pulpit from which the monk set forth with rough eloquence the wonderful powers of his indulgences, and showed a large parchment of the Pope's with many seals appended to it. On the other side was the pay table, with indulgence tickets, writing materials, and money baskets; there the ecclesiastical coadjutors sold to the thronging people everlasting salvation.*

Countless were the crimes of the Church, against which all the wounded moral feelings of the Germans were roused.

* It is thus represented in the woodcut on the title-page of a work entitled, 'Complaint of a Layman, called Hans Schwall, of the vile abuse of Christian Life,' 521, 4.

The opposition spread all over Germany; but the man had not yet appeared, who, by a fearful inward struggle, discerning all the griefs and longings of the people, was preparing to become the leader of his nation, which would in his determined character, see with enthusiasm its own mind embodied. For two years he had been teacher of natural philosophy and dialects in the new university of Wittenberg, and was still lying in the dust of the Roman plains, looking with pious enthusiasm at the towers of the holy city appearing on the verge of the horizon. In the mean while we may learn from the experiences of a Latin scholar, what was working in the souls of the people.

Frederick Mecum (Latinized into Myconius *) was the son of honest citizens of Lichtenfelds, in Upper Franconia, and was born in 1491. When thirteen years of age, he went to the Latin school of the then flourishing city of Annaberg, where he experienced what we propose giving in his own words. In 1510 he went into a monastery, and as a Franciscan he was one of the first, most zealous, and faithful followers of the Wittenberg professors. He left his order, became a preacher at the new church in Thuringia, and finally pastor and superintendent at Gotha, where he established the Reformation, and died in 1546. The connecting link between him and Luther was of a very peculiar nature; he was not only his most intimate friend in many relations of private life, but there was a poetry in his connection with him which spread a halo round his whole life. Seven years before Luther began the Reformation, Myconius saw in a dream the vision of that great man, who calmed the doubts of his excited heart; enlightened by his dream, the faithful, pious German discovered in him the great friend of every future hour. But another circumstance gives us an interest in the narrator.

* The similarity of his Latinized name with that of Oswald Myconius, of Geisshaüser, teacher of Thomas Platter, is not owing to any relationship.

However unlike, this gentle, delicately organized man may appear to his daring friend, there was a striking similarity in the youthful life of both, and much which is unknown to us of Luther's youth may be explained in what Myconius relates of his own. Both were poor scholars from a Latin school; both were driven by their inward struggles and youthful enthusiasm into a monastery, and found there only new doubts, greater struggles, and years of torment and anxious uncertainty instead of that peace for which they so passionately longed. To both was the shameless Tetzel the rock of offence, which stirred up their minds, and determined the whole course of their future life: finally, both died in the same year, —Myconius seven weeks after Luther, having five years before, been restored to life from a mortal illness by Luther's letter of invocation.* Few of Frederick Myconius' works have been printed: besides theological essays, he wrote a chronicle of his own time in German, in which he describes with the greatest detail his own labours and the state of Gotha. "The dream" which he had the first night after he entered the monastery is well known, and has often been printed. In the dream the Apostle Paul presents himself to him as his leader, and, as Myconius in after years fancied, had the form, face, and voice of Luther. This long dream was written in Latin, but we find a German translation of the introduction, in a manuscript of the same date, in the Duke's library at Gotha, from which we give the following extracts:—

"Johannis Tetzel of Pyrna in Meissen, a Dominican monk,

* Luther writes in 1541:—"So I desire and beg of our dear God to allow me to be sick, and to lay aside this mortal coil in your stead; therefore I beg and admonish you in all earnestness to pray to God together with us, that He may preserve you in life for the service and improvement of his church, and to the confusion of the devil.

"*May the Lord never allow me to hear, as long as I live, that you are dead, but ordain that you shall outlive me. This I earnestly pray for, and being certified of it, will have it so, and my will shall come to pass. Amen.*"

was a powerful preacher of the papal indulgences. He tarried two years in the then new city of Annaberg for this object, and so deluded the people that they all believed there was no other way to obtain forgiveness of sins and eternal life, than by the sufficiency of our own works, which sufficiency he added was impossible. But there was one way remaining, namely, to obtain it by money from the Pope: so we bought the papal indulgence, which he called forgiveness of sins and a certain entrance into eternal life. Here I could relate wonder upon wonder, and many incredible things which I heard preached by Tetzel for two years at Annaberg, for he preached every day, and I listened to him assiduously. I even repeated his sermons by heart to others; imitating his delivery and gestures; not that I did it to ridicule him, but from my great earnestness, for I considered it all as *oracular*, and the word of God, which ought to be believed; and what ever came from the Pope I considered as if it were from Christ himself.

"At last, about Whitsuntide, 1510, he threatened to take down the red cross, close the door of heaven, and extinguish the sun, adding, that we should never more have the opportunity of obtaining remissions of sins and eternal life for so little money, as it could not be hoped that this benevolent mission from the Pope would return again as long as the world lasted. He admonished every one to take care of his soul, and those of his friends, both living and dead, for that now was the accepted time, now was the day of salvation. And he said, 'Let no one neglect his own eternal happiness, for if ye have not the papal letter, ye cannot be absolved from many sins, nor, *casibus reservatis*, by any man.' Printed letters were publicly affixed to the walls and doors of the church, in which it was promised that, as a token of thanks to the German people for their piety, from henceforth till the close of the sale, the indulgence letters and the full

power of remission should be sold at a less price; at the end of the letter, underneath, was written, *pauperibus dentur gratis*,—to the poor who have nothing, the letters of indulgence shall be given without money, for God's sake.

"Then I began to deal with this commissary of indulgence wares; but in truth I was led and encouraged hereto by the Holy Spirit, although I myself knew not at the time what I did.

"My dear father had taught me in my childhood the Ten Commandments, the Lord's Prayer, and the Creed, and insisted upon my continually praying; for, said he, all that we have is from God alone, and He gives it us gratis, and He will lead and direct us if we pray to Him diligently. Of the papal indulgences, he said, they were only nets with which money was fished out of the pockets of the simple, and one could not assuredly obtain for money the forgiveness of sins and eternal life. But the priests became angry when such things were said. When, therefore, I daily heard in the sermons nothing but praise of the indulgences, I doubted whom I should most believe, my dear father, or the priests as teachers of the Church. But though I had doubts, I believed more the instructions of the priests than those of my father. The only thing I could not, however, allow, was, that the forgiveness of sins could only be obtained by money, especially when it was question of the poor. Therefore, the *clausula* at the end of the papal letter, *pauperibus gratis dentur propter Deum*, pleased me wonderfully.

"As at the end of three days, the cross, together with the steps and ladder to heaven, were to be taken down with extraordinary solemnity, the spirit led me to go to the commissary, and beg of him letters of remission out of charity to the poor. I declared that I was a sinner, and poor, and needed forgiveness of my sins, which I ought to receive gratis. The second day, at the time of vespers, I

entered the house of Hans Pflock, where Tetzel with the confessors and crowd of priests were assembled together. I accosted them in the Latin language, and entreated that they would, according to the command in the Pope's letter, allow me, a poor lad, to obtain the absolution of all my sins gratis, and for God's sake, '*Etiam nullo casu reservato*,' —without reserve, and thereupon they should give me the '*literas testimoniales*,'—written testimony, of the Pope. The priests were much astonished at my Latin speech, for it was at this time a rare thing, especially with young boys; and they went speedily out of the room into the next apartment, where was Herr Commissary Tetzel. They laid before him my request, and begged of him to give me gratis the letter of indulgence. At last, after holding long counsel, they came again, and brought me this answer: 'Dear son, we have carefully laid your petition before the Herr Commissary, and he bids us say he would gladly grant it, but he cannot; and if he were to do so, this concession would become powerless, and of no avail. For he has shown us that it is clear from the Pope's letter, it is those only *qui porrigent manum adjutricem*,—those who help with the hand, that is, those who give money, that will certainly partake of the merciful indulgences and treasures of the Church, and of the merits of Christ.' And this they told me all in German, for there was not one among them who could speak three words of Latin rightly.

"But I again renewed my petition, and showed them, how in the papal letter the holy father had commanded that these indulgences should be freely given to the poor, for God's sake, more especially as it was therein written: *ad mandatum Domini papæ proprium*, that is, by his highness the Pope's own commands.

"Then they went again to the proud, haughty monk, and begged him to grant my petition, for I was a deep-thinking

and eloquent youth, who deserved that more should be bestowed upon him than upon others. But they brought back the same answer. I remained firm, however, and said that they did great injustice to me, a poor boy whom neither God nor the Pope would shut out from grace, and whom they wanted to discard for the sake of a few pence, which I had not. Then followed a dispute. They said I must give something, however little, if it was only a few groschen, that the helping hand might not be wanting. I answered, 'I have it not, I am poor.' At last it came to this, I was to give six *pfennige*, to which I replied again, 'I have not a single *pfennig*.' They tried to persuade me, and conferred together. At last I heard them say that they were in anxiety on two points; first, they must on no account let me go without the indulgence, as this might be a concerted plan, and lead to mischief hereafter, for it was clearly written in the Pope's letter that indulgences were to be given free to the poor; but on the other hand, it was necessary to take something from me, that others might not hear that they were given away gratis, in which case a whole crowd of poor scholars and beggars would come and demand them. They need not have had any anxiety on this account, for the poor beggars would rather seek for bread to drive away their hunger.

"After they had taken counsel they came again to me, and offered me six *pfennige*, that I might give it to the commissary; by this contribution they said that I should become one of the builders of the church of St. Peters at Rome, a slayer of the Turks, and partaker of the indulgence and grace of Christ. But I spoke out freely, stirred by the Holy Spirit, and said that if I was to buy indulgence and remission of sins, I could sell one of my books, and obtain it with my own money; but I wished to have it given me freely for God's sake, or they would have to answer before God, for having trifled with the happiness of my soul for the sake of six

pfennige, when both God and the Pope desired that I should be partaker of the forgiveness of sins for charity sake. I said this, but truly did not know how it stood with the letters of indulgence.

"After this speech the priests inquired of me from whence I had been sent, and who had instructed me to deal with them about this matter. Then I told them the simple truth, how it was that I had not been told or sent by any one, or induced to come by other men's counsel, but had of myself made this request, in full trust and confidence in the free and charitable gift of forgiveness of sins; and I had never before in my life spoken to, or dealt with such great people, for I was by nature modest; and if I had not been constrained by my great thirst for the mercy of God, I should not have ventured on so high an undertaking. Then they again offered me the indulgence, but in this way: I was to buy it with six *pfennige*, and these *pfennige* were to be returned to me for myself. But I remained firm that he who had the power should give me the indulgence free; and if he would not, I would commend the affair to my dear God, and resign myself into his hands; and so they dismissed me.

"The holy thieves were however sorrowful over this affair. I too was somewhat troubled that I had not got my indulgence; yet I also rejoiced that in spite of them there was one in heaven who would forgive the sins of the penitent sinner, without money and without price, according to the text which I had often repeated in church: 'As I live, saith the Lord God, I would not the death of a sinner, but that he should be converted and live.' Ah, dear Lord God, thou knowest that I have not lied or invented.

"I was so overcome by all this, that whilst I was going home to my lodging, I was dissolved in tears. When I arrived there, I went into my room and took the crucifix, that always lay on the table in my study, placed it on the

bench, and fell down before it on the ground. I cannot here describe it, but I then felt the spirit of prayer and grace, which thou, my God and Lord, pouredst out upon me. The purport of my prayer was this, I beg that thou, dear God, wouldst be my father, and wouldst forgive me my sins. I resign myself to thee altogether and entirely; thou mayest do with me what thou pleasest, and though the priests will not be merciful to me without money, be thou my merciful God and Father.

"Then I found that my whole heart was changed: I felt vexed with all worldly things, and imagined that I was quite wearied with this life. Only one thing I desired, which was, to live for God and to please Him. But who was there that could teach me, and how was I to effect this? For the Word, the light and life of men, was throughout the whole world buried in the darkness of human traditions and the mad idea of 'good works.' Of Christ nothing was said, nothing was known of Him; or if He was mentioned, He was represented to us as an angry and terrible judge, whom his mother and all the saints in heaven could hardly appease, or persuade to be merciful even by tears of blood; and it was said that He, Christ, would cast those men who repented, for seven years into purgatory for every mortal sin: there was no difference between the pains of purgatory and those of hell, except that they were not eternal. But now the Holy Spirit gave me the hope that God would be merciful unto me.

"After this I began to consider how I was to enter upon a new course of life. I saw the sinfulness of the whole world, and of the whole human race. I saw my own manifold sins which were so very great. I had heard somewhat of the great holiness and of the pure and innocent life of monks; how they served God day and night, were separated from all the wickedness of the world, and lived a temperate, pious, and chaste life, performed masses, sang psalms, and were always

fasting and praying. I had also seen something of this plausible life, but I did not know that it was the greatest idolatry and hypocrisy.

"I consulted with my preceptor, the master Andreas Staffeltstein, who was rector of the school; he advised me to enter the newly built Franciscan monastery, and for fear I should change my mind through any long delay, he went himself with me to the monks, praised my talents and intellect, and boasted that in me alone amongst all his scholars he had perfect confidence, that I should become a truly godly man.

"I desired, however, beforehand to mention my undertaking to my parents, and to hear their opinion upon it, as I was their only son and heir; but the monks showed me out of St. Jerome that I ought not to regard father or mother, but leave them, and take up the cross of Christ. And they quoted the saying of Christ: 'No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God;' and thus they pressed me to become a monk. I will not here speak of the many bonds and fetters with which they bound and shackled my conscience. They told me I could never henceforth be happy if I did not at once accept the offered grace of God; and as I would rather have died than have been deprived of the grace of God and eternal life, I at once consented, and promised that I would in three days return to the monastery, and commence my year of probation, as it is called; that is, I would become a pious, devout, and God-fearing monk.

"On the 14th of July, in the year 1510, about two o'clock in the afternoon, I entered the monastery, accompanied by my preceptor, some of my schoolfellows, and certain devout matrons, to whom I had partly explained why I entered the ecclesiastical order. I then gave my blessing to all who had thus accompanied me, who with many tears implored for me

God's grace and blessing. And so it came to pass that I went into a monastery. Dear God, thou knowest that this is all true. It was not a life of idleness nor good living that I sought, nor yet the odour of sanctity, but I wished to please thee, and to serve thee well.

"Thus for a time I groped on in great darkness."

CHAPTER V.

OUT OF THE MONASTERY INTO THE CONFLICT.

(ABOUT 1522.)

THE storm broke loose; it convulsed the whole nation as with electric fire: the words of the Augustine of Wittenburg rolled through the land like peals of thunder, and every clap betokened an advance and a victory. Even now, after three centuries and a half, this prodigious movement has an irresistible fascination for the German people. Never, from its first existence, had the nation revealed its innermost being so touchingly and grandly. All the fine qualities of the German mind and character burst forth at this time; enthusiasm, self-devotion, a deep moral indignation, an intense pleasure in systematic thought, and an inward seeking after the highest. Every individual took his share in the strife. The travelling trader over the fire at night contended for or against the indulgences, the countryman in the most remote villages heard with astonishment of the new heretic whom his spiritual father cursed in every sermon, and the women of the villages no longer gave willingly to the mendicant monks. A sea of small literature overflowed the country, a hundred printing-presses were in activity, spreading abroad the numerous controversial writings, both learned and popular; parties raged in every cathedral and parish church; everywhere men of resolute character amongst the ecclesiastics declared themselves for the new doctrines, whilst the weaker

ones struggled with timid doubts; the doors of the monasteries were opened, and the cells soon became empty. Every month brought to the people something new and unheard of.

It was no longer a quarrel between priests, as Hutten had in the beginning contemptuously called the dispute between the Wittenberger and Tetzel; it had become a war of the nation against the Romish supremacy and its supporters. Ever more powerfully rose the image of Luther before his cotemporaries. Banished, cursed, persecuted by Pope and Emperor, by princes and high ecclesiastics, he became in four short years the idolized hero of the people. His journey to Worms was described in the style of the Holy Scriptures, and the over-zealous placed him on a footing with the martyrs of the New Testament.* The learned also felt themselves irresistibly drawn into the struggle; even Erasmus smiled approbation, and Hutten's soul fired up in the cause of the new teacher, he no longer wrote in Latin, but broke forth in German, more stormy and wild than the Wittenberger, with a fire that consumed himself, the knight fought his last fight for the peasant's son.

The man on whom for half a generation the highest feelings of his nation were concentrated, now enters upon the scene. Yet before we endeavour to understand his mind, it is well to point out, shortly, how his peculiar character worked upon impartial cotemporaries. We first take the witness of a moderate and truthful mind, who never personally knew Luther, and who later, in a middle position between the Wittenberger and the Swiss reformer, had reason to be dissatisfied with Luther's stubbornness. Ambrosius Blaurer, born in Constance, of noble family, was a brother of the old Benedictine monastery of Alpirsbach, in the wildest part of the Black Forest; he was afterwards a

* See 'Dr. Martin Luther's Passion,' written by Marcellus: the author is probably the marshal of Strasbourg.

writer of sacred poetry, and at the time we are speaking of, thirty years old. He had left the cloister in 1523, and fled to his family. At the instigation of his Abbot, the Stadtholder of the principality of Würtemberg demanded that he should be sent back to the monastery by the Burgomaster and council of Constance. Blaurer published a defence, from which the following is taken. He became shortly after a preacher in Constance, and on the restoration of Duke Ulrich, one of the reformers of Würtemberg, and died at a great age at Winterthur. What he praises and blames in Luther may be considered as the general view of his character taken at that time by earnest minds.

"I call God and my own conscience to witness that no wilfulness or frivolous motive drove me out of the monastery, or excited me to abandon it. Vulgar rumour reports, that monks and nuns have left their convents on account of their aversion to its tranquil life, and that they might live in carnal freedom, and give vent to their wilfulness and worldly desires. But I was actuated by honourable and weighty reasons, and great troubles and urgings of conscience, on account of the word of God. I hope that all the circumstances of my departure will show neither levity, wantonness, nor unseemly purpose? I laid aside neither cowl nor capouch except for a few days after my departure for my greater security, till I had reached my place of refuge. I neither left to fight, nor to carry away a pretty wife, but I went forthwith as quickly as I could to my much loved mother and relations, who are undoubted Christians, and are held in such honour and esteem in the city of Constance, that it is certain they would never counsel or help me in any unworthy undertaking.

"Therefore I trust that my previous conduct and course of life will relieve me from any suspicion of unseemly or wilful intentions; for although I may not boast myself before God,

yet I may before men glory in the Lord, that I, whether in the cloister or the school, here, and wherever I have been, have retained a good repute and esteem, with much love and favour, on account of my uprightness. You yourselves have heard the messengers from Würtemberg acknowledge that there was no complaint or evil report of my conduct or manner of life at the monastery of Alpirsbach, but that I have behaved myself well and piously; all they can say against me is, that I have concerned myself too much with what they call the seductive and cursed teaching of Martin Luther, whose writings I have read and adhered to, and preached them, contrary to the command of the abbot, publicly to the laity in the monastery; and when this was forbidden me, I yet continued secretly, and as it were in a corner, to infuse them into the souls of some of the young gentlemen there. With such praise from my fathers and brethren I am well content, and can justify myself for this one misdeed, as a Christian, from the word of God, and I hope that my defence will serve to remove false and ungrounded suspicions, not only from me, but also from others.

"When in the course of the last year, the works and opinions of Martin Luther were spread abroad and became known, they came into my hands before they had been condemned and forbidden by the ecclesiastical and lay authorities; and like other newly printed works, I saw and read them. In the beginning, these doctrines appeared to me somewhat strange and objectionable, and contrary to the long-established theology and clever teaching of the schools, in opposition also to the papal and ecclesiastical rights, and to the old, and, as I then considered them, praiseworthy customs and usages of our forefathers. But it was not less evident to me that this man interspersed everywhere in his teaching clear and distinct passages from the Holy Scriptures, according to which all human teaching ought to be guided

and judged, accepted or rejected. I was much amazed, and stirred up to read these doctrines, not once or twice, but frequently, with much industry and earnest attention, and to weigh and compare them with the evangelical writings to which they constantly appealed. The longer I did this, the more I perceived with what great dignity the Holy Scriptures were treated by this learned and enlightened man,—how purely and delicately he handled them, how cleverly and well he everywhere brought them forward, how skilfully he compared and weighed them one with the other, and how he explained the dark and difficult texts, by bringing forward others that were clearer and more comprehensible. I saw also that there was great mastership in his treatment of the Scriptures, and that it afforded the most substantial aid to a right understanding of them, so that every intelligent layman who industriously studied his books, could distinctly perceive that these doctrines were true and Christian, and had the firmest foundation. On that account they impressed themselves on my mind, and deeply touched my heart: it was to me as if a veil had fallen from before my eyes; I felt they were in no wise to be distrusted, like those of so many other school teachers that I had formerly read, because their aim was neither dominion, fame, nor worldly enjoyment, but to place before us, only the poor, despised, and crucified Christ, and to teach us to live a pure, moderate, and sober life, conformable in all things to the doctrine of Christ; and they were therefore too hard and self-denying for the ambitious and many beneficed priests and doctors, puffed up with pride and vain glory, who sought in the Scriptures their own honour and fame, more than the Spirit of God. Therefore would I rather give up all my worldly means and life itself, than be deprived of them, not for the sake of Luther, who, except as he appears in his writings, is unknown to me, and being only a man, may, like other men, be in error; but for

the sake of the word of God, which he holds so clearly and distinctly, and explains so victoriously and triumphantly from the fullness of his undaunted spirit.

"The enemy endeavoured to embitter this honey to us by representing that Luther was testy and irritable, aggressive and sarcastic; that he attacked his opponents the great princes and ecclesiastical and lay lords, with audacity; had recourse to abuse and slander, and forgot all brotherly love and Christian moderation. He had, it is true, often displeased me by this, and I would not desire any one to do the like; but I could not on that account reject and cast aside his good Christian teaching, nor even condemn him in these respects; and for this reason, that I could not read his mind, nor the secret counsels of God, as perhaps it might be the means of drawing people from his teaching. And as it was not his own cause, but the divine word that he defended, much allowance should be made for him, and all should be attributed to zealous indignation for God. Even Christ, the source and pattern of all meekness, severely rebuked before others the stubborn and stony-hearted Pharisees, and called them false hypocrites, painted sepulchres, sons of harlots, blind leaders of the blind, and also the children of the devil, as may be seen in the gospels. (Matt. xii. 15, 23; John viii.) Perhaps Luther would gladly speak well of many if he could do so with truth; he may not think it fitting to call those who are in darkness, enlightened; nor rapacious wolves, good shepherds; nor the unmerciful, merciful; for without doubt, had God not been more merciful to him than they have been, he would not now be upon earth. But however this may be, I will not defend him in this place, but laying aside his expressions of contempt and abuse, accept with thankfulness the earnestness of his valiant Christian writings for our amendment.

"As I openly persevered in what I had undertaken advisedly, and would not desist at the bidding of any one, being

bound as a Christian not to do so, the displeasure of my superior at Alpirsbach, and certain others of the monastery, greatly increased, and the sword of God's anger began to cause division and discord between the brothers. I was peremptorily ordered to abstain from my undertaking, and also not to speak of these matters with others; but as I could not do this, being bound to yield obedience to God's commands, rather than to those of man, I earnestly begged of my Abbot and monastery, that they would graciously give me leave of absence. I wished for a year or two to support myself at some school or elsewhere, without being any expense to the monastery, and perhaps in the mean while, by a godly examination of the cause of our discord, it might be brought to a peaceable end.

"This being however refused by them, I resolved, after having taken counsel with many wise, learned, and God-fearing men and friends, to leave the monastery." So far Ambrosius Blaurer.

Whilst brother Ambrosius was yet looking anxiously from the windows of his cell, over the pines of the Black Forest into the free expanse, another was riding out of the gate of a princely castle near the woodclad mountains of Thuringia. Behind him lay the dark *Drachenschlucht;* before him the long ridge of the magic Hörselberges, wherein dwelt an enchantress, to whom the Pope, that wicked forgiver of sins, had once driven back the repentant Tannhäuser. But the dry stick which the Pope had then thrust into the ground, brought forth green foliage during the night; God himself confuted the Pope. The poor penitent man no longer required the Bishop of Rome to enable him to find mercy and grace from his heavenly Father; but the wicked Pope himself would descend into the jaws of the old dragon.

The exterior of the man who was riding down from Wartburg to Wittenberg, shall be described by a young student

who was travelling with a friend from Switzerland to Saxony. His narrative is well known, yet we must not omit it here.

His name was John Kessler; he was born at St. Gallen, in 1502; his parents were poor citizens; he attended the school of the monastery there, studied theology at Basle, and went early in the spring of 1522 with a companion to Wittenberg, to continue his studies under the Reformers. In the autumn of 1523, he returned to his native town, and as the new doctrines had not yet taken root there, being very poor he determined to learn a trade, and became a saddler. He soon collected a small community round him, taught and preached, laboured in his workshop, wrote books, and became at last schoolmaster, librarian and member of a council of education. He had an unpretending, pure nature, with a heart full of love and gentle warmth, but he took no active part in the theological controversies of his time. His narrative begins as follows:—

"When we were travelling to Wittenberg to study the Holy Scriptures, we arrived at Jena in Thuringia, in, God knows how wild a storm; and after many inquiries in the city for a lodging wherein we might pass the night, we could not find any; everywhere lodging was denied us, for it was Shrovetide,* when pilgrims and strangers were little cared for. So we determined to leave the town, and endeavour to reach a village where they would lodge us. In the mean while we met at the gate an honest man, who spoke kindly to us, and inquired where we were going so late, as there was neither house nor farm that we could reach before night; besides which, it was a road that was difficult to find; therefore he advised us to remain there.

"We answered: 'Dear father, we have tried all the inns to which we have been directed, and having everywhere been refused a lodging, we are obliged to proceed further.' Then he

* It was the evening of the 4th March, 1522.

asked us whether we had made inquiry at the Black Bear; and we replied: 'It has never been mentioned to us; tell us, dear father, where we shall find it.' He then showed us a little way out of the town, and when we came to the Black Bear, behold, the landlord, instead of refusing us, as all the others had done, came to meet us at the door, and not only received us, but kindly begged of us to lodge there, and took us into a room.

"There we found a man sitting alone at a table, and before him lay a book; he greeted us kindly, and bid us approach and sit by him at the table; for we were seating ourselves quietly on a bench close to the door, as our shoes (if one may be allowed to write it) were so covered with mud and dirt, that we were ashamed to enter the room on account of our dirty footmarks. He invited us to drink, which we could not refuse, and as we found him so kind and cordial, we seated ourselves by him at his table as he had asked us, and called for a quart of wine, that we might return his civility by asking him to drink. We supposed him however to be a knight, as he was dressed in hosen and jerkin, with a red leather cap, and without armour, and sat, according to the custom of his country, with a sword at his side, with one hand resting on the pommel and the other clasping the hilt. His eyes were black and deep set, flashing and sparkling like stars, so that one could hardly bear to look at them.

"Shortly after, he asked where we were born, but answered himself: 'You are Swiss; from what part of Switzerland do you come?' We replied, 'From St. Gallen.' He then said, 'If you are going, as I hear, to Wittenberg, you will find there some good countrymen of yours, Dr. Jerome Schurf and his brother Dr. Augustin.'

"We said, 'We have letters to them;' and we proceeded to inquire: 'Can you inform us, sir, whether Martin Luther is now at Wittenberg; or if not, where he is?'

"He answered, 'I know for certain that Luther is not now

at Wittenberg, but will return soon. Philip Melancthon is however there, who teaches Greek, and others who teach Hebrew. In truth I would advise you to study both, as they are needful for the right understanding of the Holy Scriptures.' We replied, 'So help us God! as long as He grants us life, we will not desist till we have seen and heard this man; for on his account we have undertaken this journey, as we learn that he will overthrow the priesthood, together with the mass, that being a service founded on error. As we have been brought up by our parents, and destined from our youth to be priests, we are anxious to hear what his teaching is, and what authority he can bring forward for such propositions.'

"After we had thus spoken, he inquired: 'Where have you studied hitherto?'—Answer: 'At Basle.'—Then he said: 'How are things going on at Basle? Is Erasmus of Rotterdam still there, and what is he doing?'

"We replied: 'We only know, sir, that all is going on well, and that Erasmus is there; but what he is about is unknown to and concealed from every one, as he keeps himself quite quiet and private.'

"This manner of talk appeared to us very strange in the knight; how could he know everything relative to the two Schurfs, of Philip, and Erasmus, and also be aware of the necessity of learning Greek and Hebrew? He introduced occasionally Latin words, so that we bethought us he must be more than a common knight.

"'Dear sons,' he said, 'what do they think in Switzerland about Luther?'

"We answered: 'Sir, there, as everywhere, opinions vary. Many cannot exalt him sufficiently, and thank God who has manifested his truth through him, and exposed error; but many condemn him as a cursed heretic, especially all the ecclesiastics.'

"He answered: 'I can well imagine it of the priests.'

"Thus holding converse, we became quite at home with him, so that my companion took up the book that was lying before him and opened it. It was the Hebrew Psalter; he put it down again quickly and the knight drew it towards him. Then my companion said: 'I would give one of my fingers to be able to understand this language.' He answered, 'You will have no difficulty in comprehending it, providing you devote yourself to it industriously; I also desire to know more of it, and study it daily.'

"In the mean while evening drew on, and it became quite dark. The landlord came to the table, and when he learned our longing desire to know Martin Luther, he said, 'Dear comrades, if you had been here two days ago, you would have succeeded, for he was here, and sat at this table, and,' pointing with his finger, 'in that very place.' We were much vexed and provoked that we had missed him, and laid the blame of it on the muddy bad road which had delayed us; but we said, 'We rejoice, however, that we are in the same house and sitting at the same table at which he sat.'

"At this the landlord laughed and went away. After a little while the landlord called to me to come to him outside the door of the room. I was frightened, and thought that perhaps without intending it I had done something that was unbecoming.

"Then he said to me, 'As I know that you wish to hear and see Luther; it is he who sits by you.'

"I took this for a joke, and said, 'I see indeed, good sir, that you wish to banter me by imposing upon me a false Luther.' He answered, 'It is he most assuredly; but do not show that you think so, or that you recognize him.' I assented, but did not believe him. I went again into the room, and placed myself at the table; and was anxious to tell my companion what the landlord had said. At last I turned to him and whispered secretly, 'The landlord has told me that

this is Luther.' He would not believe it any more than I, and said, 'He perhaps told you that it was Hutten, and you did not rightly understand him.' As the dress and bearing reminded me more of Hutten than a monk like Luther, I was persuaded that he had said it was Hutten, as the beginning of both names sounded so much alike: what I further said, was as if spoken to the knight, Herr Ulrich von Hutten.

"In the mean while there arrived two merchants, who intended to remain there all night: after they had taken off their travelling dresses and spurs, one of them laid down near him an unbound book. Then Martinus asked what kind of book it was; and he answered, 'It is Dr. Luther's exposition of some of the gospels and epistles, just printed and published; have you not yet seen it?' Martinus said, 'I shall soon get it.' The host now desired us to arrange ourselves at table, as it was time to eat; we begged of him to have consideration for us and give us something separate, but he replied, 'Dear comrades, place yourselves by these gentlemen at table, I will charge you moderately.' When Martinus heard this, he said, 'Come here, I will settle for you with the landlord.'

"During the meal, Martinus spoke many kind and godly words, so that the merchants as well as ourselves were mute before him; attending more to his words than to the viands before us. Amongst other things, he lamented with a sigh that the princes and lords just then assembled at the Imperial Diet at Nuremberg, on account of the troubles of the German nation, and for the sake of the pending proceedings concerning God's word, were only inclined to waste their time in costly tournaments, sledge drives, vanity, and dissipation, when fear of God and Christian prayer would be of more avail. 'But such are our *Christian* princes.' He further said, 'There was hope that evangelical truth would bear more fruit among the children and descendants who were not poisoned by papal errors, and might yet be grounded in pure

truth and the word of God, than among the parents in whom error was so deeply rooted that it could hardly be eradicated.

"Then the merchants gave their opinions freely, and one of them said, 'I am a simple layman, and understand little of these disputes, but I must speak of things as I find them; Luther must either be an angel from heaven, or a devil out of hell. I would gladly, however, give ten gulden to confess to him, for I believe he could and would give me good instruction.' Then the landlord came to us, and said secretly, 'Martinus has paid for your supper:' that gave us much pleasure, not for the sake of the money and food, but for the hospitality shown us by this man. After supper the merchants rose and went to the stable to look after their horses; in the mean while Martinus remained alone with us in the room; we thanked him for the honour he had done us, as well as for the gift, and as we did so we showed him that we took him for Ulrich von Hutten; but he said, 'I am not Hutten.'

"Then the landlord coming in, Martinus said, 'I have become a nobleman to-night, for these Swiss have taken me for Ulrich von Hutten.' The landlord replied, 'You are not him, but Martinus Luther.' Then Martinus laughing as if it were a joke, said, 'These take me for Hutten, you for Luther, soon I shall become a Markolfus.'* After this talk he took a long glass of beer, and said, according to the custom of the country, 'Drink with me a friendly glass with God's blessing;' and when I was going to take the glass from him, he changed it, and offered instead a glass with wine, saying, 'The beer is foreign to you, and you are unaccustomed to it, drink the wine.' Meanwhile he rose and threw his tabard over his shoulders, and took leave. He held out his hand to us, and said, 'If you go to Wittenberg, greet Dr. Jerome Schurf for me.' We replied, 'We will do that with pleasure, but how must we designate you, that he may understand your greet-

* A spirit supposed to haunt certain parts of Germany in those days.

ing?' He answered, 'Say nothing further than that he who is coming sends you greeting; he will immediately understand these words.' So he departed from us and went to rest.

"Afterwards the merchants returned into the room, and called to the landlord to bring them something to drink; in the mean while they had much talk about the guest, and wondered who he could be. The landlord declared it was Luther, and the merchants were soon convinced of it, and regretted that they had spoken so unbecomingly before him, and said, 'They would rise at an early hour in the morning, that they might see him before he started; and would beg of him not to be angry with them, as they had not known who he was.' This they did, and found him in the morning in the stable; but Martinus answered them, 'You said last night at supper that you would give ten gulden to confess yourself to Luther; when you do so, you will see and learn if I am Martinus Luther.' He did not make himself further known, but mounted his horse and rode off to Wittenberg.

"On the following Saturday, the day before the first Sunday in Lent, we presented ourselves at Dr. Jerome Schurf's house to deliver our letters. When we entered the room, behold we found there the knight Martinus just as we had seen him at Jena, and with him were Philippus Melancthon, Justus Jodocus Jonas, Nicholas Amsdorf, and Dr. Augustin Schurf, who were telling him what had happened during his absence from Wittenberg: he greeted us, and laughing, pointed with his finger, and said, 'This is the Philip Melancthon of whom I told you.'"

There is nothing more remarkable in the truthlike narrative of Kessler, than the cheerful tranquillity of the great man whilst riding through Thuringia under ban and interdict, his heart filled with anxious care, on account of the great danger with which his doctrines were threatened by the fanaticism of his own partisans.

CHAPTER VI.

DR. LUTHER.

(1517—1546.)

EVEN the most enlightened Roman Catholics look with horror upon Luther and Zwinglius as originators of the schism in their old Church. It is to be hoped that such views may disappear in Germany. All sects have reason to thank Luther for whatever depth and spirituality now remains in their faith. The heretic of Wittenberg was as much the reformer of German Roman Catholics as of Protestants; not only, because in the struggle with him the teachers of the Roman Catholic Church were obliged to erect at Trent a firmer building on the ruins of the Church of the middle ages, but because he left the impress of his mind on the character of the people, in which we all equally partake. Some things for which the obstinate and pugnacious Luther contended, against both Reformers and Catholics, have been condemned by the free judgment of modern times. His doctrines, vehement and high strained, wrung from a soul full of reverence, were in some weighty points erroneous, and he was sometimes bitter, unjust, indeed harsh to his opponents; but such things should not lead Germans astray, for all the deficiencies of his nature and education disappear in the fullness of blessing, which streamed from his great heart into the life of his nation.

To few mortals has it been granted to exercise such an influence on his cotemporaries and on after times, as has

fallen to the lot of Luther: his life may be divided into three periods. In the first, the character of the man was formed; it was powerfully influenced by the surrounding world, but from the depths of human nature, under the pressure of individual character, thoughts and convictions were gradually strengthened into resolutions which broke forth into action, and the individual commenced a struggle with the world. Then followed another period, one of more energetic action, of more rapid development and of greater triumph. Ever greater became the influence of the individual on the world; powerfully did he draw the whole nation along with him; he became their hero and model; the inward life of millions seemed concentrated in one man.

But a single individual, however powerful in character, however great his aims, could not long dominate over the spirit of a nation, the life, strength, and wants of which are manifold. The man is under the constraint of the logical consequences of his thoughts and actions; all the spirits of his own deeds force him into a fixed limited path; but the soul of a people requires for its life, incessant working with the most varied aims. Much that an individual cannot bring himself to receive, is taken up by others in opposition to him. The reaction of the world begins: it is first weak, and from many quarters, with various tendencies and little authority; then it becomes stronger and more victorious. Finally, the inward spirit of the individual life confines itself within its own system, and becomes only a single element in the formation of the people. The end of a great life is always full of secret resignation, mixed with bitterness and quiet suffering.

And thus it was with Luther. The first of these periods ended with the day on which he affixed his Theses; the second continued till his return from the castle of Wartburg; the third till the beginning of the Smalkaldic war and his death. It is not our intention to give his life here, but only

to describe shortly how he became what he was. There was much in him which, only viewed from a distance, appears strange and unpleasing, but the more closely we examine his character, the greater and more amiable we find it.

Luther rose from the peasant class; his father left Möhra, a place amid the forests of the Thuringian mountains, which was half peopled by his kindred, to engage in mining in the district of Mansfeld; thus the boy was born in a cottage, where the terrors inspired by the spirits of the pine woods, and dark fissures which served as entrances to the mine in the mountains, were still strong and vivid. His mind was no doubt often occupied with the dark traditions of the heathen mythology; he was accustomed to perceive in the terrors of nature, as well as in the life of man, the work of the powers of darkness. When he became a monk, these recollections of his childhood blended themselves with the figure of the devil, and the busy tempter always wore the same aspect to his imagination as the mischievous hobgoblins that frequent the hearth and stable of the countryman.

His father was a man of concentrated and energetic character, firm and decided, and gifted with a full measure of strong common sense: he struggled hard to attain wealth; he kept strict discipline in his house, and in later years Luther remembered with grief the severe punishment he had received as a boy, and the sorrow it had inflicted on his childish heart. The influence of the old Hans Luther on the life of his son lasted till his death in 1530. When Martin went secretly into a monastery at the age of twenty-two, the old man was violently angry, as he had intended to provide for his son by a good marriage. At last friends succeeded in bringing about a reconciliation between them, and when the supplicating son approached his father, confessing that he had been driven by a fearful apparition to take the monastic vows, he replied to him in the following words: "God

grant that it may not have been a delusion of the devil." He agitated still more the heart of the monk by the angry question: "You thought you were listening to the command of God when you went into the cloister; have you never heard that it is a duty to be obedient to parents?" This made a deep impression on the son, and when, many years afterwards, he was residing at Wartburg, cast out of the Church, and proscribed by the Emperor, he wrote to his father these touching words: "Do you still wish to withdraw me from the thraldom of the monastery? You are still my father, I your son; you have on your side the power and commands of God; on my side there is only human error. Behold, that you may not boast yourself before God, He has anticipated you, and taken me out himself." From that time he was as it were restored to the old man. Hans had once reckoned upon having a grandson for whom he would work, and to this idea he stubbornly returned, regardless as to what the rest of world thought; he soon therefore admonished him earnestly, to marry, and his persuasions had a great share in determining Luther to do so. When the father, who at a great age had become councillor of Mansfeld, was about to draw his last breath, and the priest bending over him asked him whether he died in the pure faith of Christ and the Holy Gospel, old Hans collected himself once more, and said shortly: "He is a rogue who does not believe in it." When, afterwards, Luther was relating this, he added admiringly: "That was indeed a man of the olden time." The son received the account of his father's death, in the fortress of Coburg; and when he read the letter, which his wife had conveyed to him with the portrait of his youngest daughter, Magdalen, he spoke only these words to his companions: "God's will be done, my father is dead." He arose, took his psalter, went into his room, where he wept and prayed, and returned with a composed mind. The same day he wrote to

Melancthon with deep emotion, of the heartfelt love of his father, and of the entire confidence that existed between them. "Never did I despise death so much as I do now: how often do we suffer death by anticipation before we really die! I am now the eldest of my race, and I have a right to follow him."

Such was the father from whom the son derived the groundwork of his character, veracity, a steadfast will, an honest understanding, and circumspection in the management of business and in his dealings with men. His childhood was full of hardships, and he had much that was disagreeable to endure at his Latin school, and as a chorister; but he experienced also much good-will and love, and he retained, what is more easily kept in the smaller circles of life, a heart full of trust in the goodness of human nature, and respect for the great people of the world. His father was able to support him comfortably at the university of Erfurt; he was then full of youthful vigour, and took great delight in joining his companions in vocal and instrumental music. Of his mental life at that time we know but little, only that when in peril of death, in a storm, "a fearful apparition called to him from heaven." In his terror he vowed to go to a monastery, and quickly and secretly carried out his resolution.

It is here that our accounts of the state of his mind begin. At variance with his father, full of terror at an incomprehensible eternity, frightened by the anger of God, he began, in a convulsive struggle, a life of self-denial, penance, and devotion. He found no peace. All the highest questions of life stormed with fearful power over his distracted soul, which had no anchor to rest on. Strongly did he feel the need of being in harmony with God and the world, and all that he derived from his faith was unintelligible and repulsive. The mysteries of the moral government of the world were to his mind matters of the deepest import. That the good should be tormented and the wicked made happy, that God should con-

demn the whole human race with the monstrous curse of sin, because an inexperienced woman had eaten an apple, and that on the other hand the same God should bear with our sins, in love and patience; that Christ should sometimes repel upright people with severity, and at others receive adulterers, publicans, and murderers,—about all this, the wisdom of man becomes foolishness. He complained in these words to his ghostly counsellor, Staupitz: "Dear doctor, our Lord God does indeed deal terribly with us; who can serve Him when He deals such blows on all?" To which the answer was: "How could He otherwise bow down the stiff-necked?" This ingenious argument was of no comfort to the youth. In his earnest strivings to find the incomprehensible God, he tormented himself in searching out all his thoughts and dreams. Every ebullition of youthful blood, every earthly thought, appeared to him a shocking iniquity; he began to despair, and wrestled with himself in endless prayer, fasting, and mortification. On one occasion the brothers were obliged to break into his cell, where he had been lying the whole day in a state not far removed from insanity. Staupitz observed with warm sympathy the agitation and torments of his soul, and endeavoured, though only by rough consolation, to give it rest. Once when Luther had written to him, "Oh my sins! my sins! my sins!" his ghostly counsellor answered him: "You wish to be without sin, and yet have no real sins. Christ is the forgiver of mortal sins, such as the murder of parents, &c., &c. If you would have the help of Christ, you must have mortal sins to record, and not come to Him with such trifles and peccadilloes, making a sin out of every little infirmity."

The way in which Luther raised himself out of this despair decided the whole tenour of his life. The God whom he served appeared then as a God of terror, whose anger was only to be appeased by the means of grace given by the old Church, especially by continual confession, for which endless

forms and directions were given, which were but cold and empty to the spirit. By the prescriptions of the Church and the practice of so-called good works, young Luther had not attained the feeling of true reconciliation and inward peace. At last a sentence from his spiritual adviser pierced him like an arrow: "There is no true repentance that does not begin by the love of God; the love of God, and the reception of it in the soul, does not follow, but precedes the means of grace enjoined by the Church." This teaching which came from Tauler's school became for him the foundation of a new, genial, and moral relation with God; it was a holy discovery to him. The change in his own spirit was the main point for which he must labour; repentance, penance, and expiation must proceed from the inward feelings of the heart. It was by his own efforts alone that man could raise himself to God. For the first time he experienced what direct prayer was. In the place of a distant God, whom hitherto he had sought in vain, by hundreds of forms and childish confessions, he beheld the image of an all-loving protector, with whom he could hold communion at every hour, whether in joy or sorrow, before whom he could lay every grief and doubt, who incessantly sympathized with, and cared for him, and, like a good father, either granted or denied the requests of his heart. Thus he learned to pray, and how ardent his prayers became! Now he was able to live in tranquillity, being daily and hourly in communion with his God, whom he had at last found; his intercourse with the Highest became more confidential than with those dearest to him on earth. When he poured out his whole soul before Him, he obtained rest, holy peace, and a feeling of inexpressible happiness; he felt himself a portion of God, and this sense of intimate communion with Him he preserved during the whole remainder of his life. He needed no longer the distant paths of the old Church; with his God in his heart he could defy the whole world. He already ven-

tured to believe, that teaching must be false which laid such great weight on works of penance; that besides these there remained only cold satisfaction and ceremonious confession; and when later he learned from Melancthon that the Greek word for penance, "*Metanoia*," denotes literally "a change of heart," it appeared to him as a wonderful revelation. On this foundation was built that confidence of faith, with which he brought forward the words of Scripture in opposition to the prescriptions of the Church.

It was in this way that Luther, whilst still in the monastery, attained to inward freedom. The whole of his later teaching, his struggle against the indulgences, his unshaken firmness, and his method of scriptural exposition, all rest on the inward process by which as a monk he had found his God; and one may truly say that the new period of German history began with Luther's cloister prayers. Life soon placed him under its hammer, to harden the pure metal of his soul.

Luther unwillingly took the Professorship of Dialectics in the new university of Wittenberg, in 1508; he would rather have taught that new theology which he already began to consider the truth. It is known that in the year 1510 he went to Rome on the business of his order; how devoutly and piously he lingered in the holy city, and with what dismay he was seized on observing the heathenish character of the people of Rome, and the worldliness and corrupt morals of the ecclesiastics. But deeply as he was shaken by the depravity of the hierarchy, he felt that his whole life was still enclosed in it; out of it there was nothing. The exalted idea of the Roman Catholic Church, and its triumphant reign of 1500 years, fettered even the most powerful minds; and when the German in the dress of a Romish priest, and in danger of his life, contemplated the ruins of ancient Rome, and stood in amazement before the gigantic pillars of the temples, which,

according to tradition, had once been destroyed by the Goths, little did the valiant man from the mountains of the old Hermunduren then think, that it would be his own fate to destroy the temples of the Rome of the middle ages, more completely than the brethren of his ancestors had done in the olden time. Luther returned from Rome still a faithful son of the great Mother, holding all heretical proceedings, as for example those of the Bohemians, in detestation. He sympathized warmly in Reuchlin's dispute with the Cologne inquisitor, and about 1512 had sided with the Humanitarians. But even then he began to find something in their teaching which separated him from them. When some years later he was at Gotha, he did not visit the worthy Mutianus Rufus, though he wrote him a very civil letter of excuse. Soon after, he was much wounded by the coldness and worldly tone of Erasmus's dialogues, in which *theological sinners* are turned into ridicule. The profane worldliness of the Humanitarians did not suit the earnest faith of Luther; it aroused that pride which had already taken root in his soul, and caused him afterwards to wound the sensitive Erasmus in a letter intended to be conciliatory. Even the form of literary moderation adopted by Luther at this time, gives us the impression of being wrung by the pressure of Christian humility from a stubborn spirit.

He felt himself already strong and secure in his faith: in 1506 he wrote to Spalatinus, who was the connecting link between him and the Elector, Frederic the Wise, that the Elector was of all men most knowing in secular wisdom, but in things pertaining to God and the salvation of souls, he was struck with sevenfold blindness.

Luther had reason for the opinion here expressed, for the domestic disposition of this sober-minded prince showed itself in his anxiety to provide for his home the means of grace bestowed by the old Church. Amongst other

things he had a particular fancy for relics, and Staupitz, vicar-general of the Augustine monks in Germany, was at that time engaged in collecting these treasures for the Elector. This absence of his superior was very important to Luther, for he had to fill his place. He was already a man of high repute in his order; but though a professor at Wittenberg, he continued to reside in his monastery, and generally wore his monk's dress. He visited the thirty monasteries of his congregation, deposed priors, delivered strong rebukes on account of lax discipline, severely admonished criminal monks, and had become in 1517 a man of fully developed character and commanding powers; yet he still preserved somewhat of the trusting simplicity of the monastic brother.

Thus, when he had affixed the Theses against Tetzel to the church door, he writes confidingly to the Archbishop Albrecht of Maintz, the protector of the trader in indulgences. Full of the popular faith in the good sense and the good will of the governing powers, Luther thought—he often said so later—nothing was necessary but to represent straightforwardly to the princes of the Church the injurious effects and immorality of these malpractices.* But how childish

* Compare with this the beautiful passage from the 'Table Talk:'—"If, when I first began to write, I had known what I do now, I should never have been so bold as to attack and anger the Pope, and almost all men. I thought they sinned only from ignorance and human frailty; but God led me on like a horse with its eyes blinded. Good works are seldom undertaken from wisdom or foresight; they are all brought about unconsciously." To this Philip Melancthon answered, that having carefully studied history, he had observed that no great or remarkable deeds had been done by old people, but at the age when Alexander the Great and St. Augustine did them; later, men became too wise and circumspect. Dr. Martinus said: "Young companions, if you had wisdom the devil could not deal with you; but because you have not, you need ours also, who are now old. Ah, if the old were but strong, and the young wise! Behold these factious spirits—vain young people, Icaruses, Phaëtons, who flutter in the air; chamois hunters, everywhere and nowhere, who wish to knock down twelve ninepins when there are only nine standing."

did this zeal of the monk appear to the smooth and worldly prince of the Church! That which had roused such deep indignation in the upright man, had from the archbishop's point of view long been a settled question. The sale of indulgences was a much lamented evil in the Church, but unavoidable, as are to politicians many regulations not good in themselves, but necessary to preserve some great interests. The greatest interest of the archbishops and the guardians of the Romish Church was their dominion, which was to be won and maintained by such means of acquiring money. The greatest interest of Luther and the people was truth; here, therefore, their paths separated.

Thus Luther entered into the struggle, full of faith, still a true son of the Church, and with all the German devotedness to authority; but yet his firm connection with his God worked in him strongly against this authority. He was then thirty-four years of age, in the full vigour of his strength, of middle size, thin, but strongly made, so that he appeared tall by the side of the small delicate boyish figure of Melancthon. Fiery eyes, whose intense brilliancy was almost overpowering, glowed in a face in which one could perceive the effects of night watches and inward struggles. Though a man of great repute, not only in his order, but in the university, he was no great scholar; he first began to learn Greek with Melancthon, and soon afterwards Hebrew; he possessed no great compass of book learning, and never had any ambition to shine as a Latin poet. But he was astonishingly well read in the Holy Scriptures and some of the Fathers, and whatever he took up he worked out profoundly. He was unwearied in his care for the souls of his congregation, a zealous preacher, and a warm friend; he had a certain frank gaiety, together with a self-possessed demeanour, and much courteous tact; the certainty of his convictions appeared in his social intercourse, and gave a cheerful radiance to his

countenance. He was irritable, and easily moved to tears; the trifling events of the day excited and disturbed him; but when he was called upon for any great effort, and had subdued the first agitation of his nerves—which, for instance, had overcome him on his first entrance at the Imperial Diet at Worms—he then attained a wonderful composure and confidence. He did not know what fear was; indeed, his lion nature took pleasure in the most dangerous situations. The malicious snares of his enemies, and the dangers to which his life was occasionally exposed, he seemed to consider hardly worth speaking about. The foundation of this more than human heroism—if one may venture to call it so—was the firm personal union between him and his God. For a long period, with smiles and inward gladness, he desired to serve truth and God by becoming a martyr. A fearful struggle still lay before him, but it was not caused by the opposition of men; he had to contend constantly for years against the devil himself; he overcame also the terror of hell, which threatened to obscure his reason. Such a man might be destroyed, but could hardly be conquered.

The period of struggle which now follows, from the beginning of the dispute about indulgences to his departure from Wartburg, the time of his greatest triumph and greatest popularity, is that of which perhaps most is known, and yet it appears to us that his character even then is not rightly judged.

Nothing in this period is more remarkable than the way in which Luther gradually became estranged from the Romish Church. He was sober-minded and without ambition, and clung with deep reverence to the high idea of the Church, that community of believers fifteen hundred years old; yet in four short years he departed from the faith of his fathers, and shook himself free of the soil in which he had been so firmly rooted. During this whole time he had to maintain the

struggle alone, or at least with very few faithful confederates: after 1518 Melancthon was united with him. He overcame all the dangers of fierce encounters, not only against enemies, but against the anxious dissuasions of honest friends and patrons. Three times did the Romish party try to silence him by the authority of Cajetan, the persuasive eloquence of Miltitz, and the unseasonable assiduity of the pugnacious Eckius; three times he addressed the Pope in letters which are among the most valuable documents of that century. Then came the separation: he was anathematized and excommunicated; he burnt—according to the old university custom—the enemy's challenge, and with it the possibility of return. With joyful confidence he went to Worms, where the princes of his nation were to decide whether he should die, or henceforth live amongst them, without Pope or Church, by the precepts of the Holy Scriptures alone.

When first he published in print the "Theses against Tetzel," he was astounded at the prodigious effect they produced in Germany, at the venomous hatred of his enemies, and at the tokens of friendly approbation which he received from all sides. Had he done anything so very unprecedented? The opinions he expressed were entertained by all the best men in the Church. When the Bishop of Brandenburg sent the Abbot of Lehnin to him, with a request that he would withdraw from the press his German sermon upon indulgences and grace, however right its contents might be, the poor Augustine friar was deeply moved that so great a man should hold such friendly and cordial intercourse with him, and he felt inclined to give up the publication rather than make himself a lion disturbing the Church. He zealously endeavoured to refute the report that the Elector had induced him to engage in the dispute with Tetzel. "They wish to involve the innocent Prince in the odium that belongs to me only." He desired as much as possible to preserve

peace with Miltitz before Cajetan; only one thing he would not do: he would not retract what he had said against the unchristian sale of indulgences. But this retraction was the only thing that the hierarchy required of him. Long did he continue to wish for peace, reconciliation, and a return to the peaceful occupations of his cell; but some false assertion of his opponents always reinflamed his blood, and every contradiction was followed by a new and sharper stroke of his weapons.

The heroic confidence of Luther is striking; even in his first letter to Leo X., dated the 30th May, 1518, he is still the faithful son of the Church; he still concludes by laying himself at the feet of the Pope; offers him his whole life and being, and promises to respect his voice as the voice of Christ, whose representative he is as sovereign of the Church. But in the midst of all this submission, which became him as a monastic brother, these impassioned words burst forth: "If I have deserved death, I do not refuse to die." And in the letter itself, how strong are the expressions with which he describes the insolence of the indulgence vendors! Honest, too, are his expressions of surprise at the effect of his Theses, which were difficult to understand, being, according to the old custom, composed of enigmatical and involved propositions. Good humour pervades the manly words, "What shall I do? I cannot retract. I am only an unlearned man, of narrow capacity, not highly cultivated, in a century full of intellect and taste, which might even put Cicero into a corner. But necessity has no law; the goose must cackle among the swans."

The following year all who esteemed Luther endeavoured to bring about a reconciliation. Staupitz, Spalatinus, and the Elector scolded, entreated, and urged. Even the Pope's chamberlain, Miltitz, praised his opinions, whispered to him that he was quite right, entreated, drank with, and kissed him;

though Luther indeed had reason to believe that the courtier had a secret commission to take him if possible a prisoner to Rome. The mediators happily hit on a point in which the refractory man heartily agreed with them; it was, that respect for the Church must be maintained and its unity not destroyed; Luther therefore promised to keep quiet and to leave the disputed points to the decision of three eminent bishops. Under these circumstances he was pressed to write a letter of apology to the Pope; but this letter of the 3rd of March, 1519, though undoubtedly approved by the mediators and wrung from the writer, shows the advance that Luther had already made. Of the humility which our theologians discover in it, there is little; it is, however, thoroughly cautious and diplomatic in its style. Luther regrets that what he has done to defend the honour of the Romish Church has been attributed to him as a want of respect; he promises henceforth to be silent on the subject of indulgences,—provided his opponents would be the same, and to address a letter to the people admonishing them loyally to obey the Church,* and not estrange themselves from it, because his opponents had been insolent and he himself harsh. But all these submissive words could not conceal the chasm which already separated his spirit from that of the Romish Church. With what cold irony he writes: "What shall I do, most holy father? All counsel fails me; I cannot bear your anger, and yet know not how to avoid it. It is desired that I should retract; if by this what they aim at could be effected, I would do so without delay, but the opposition of my opponents has spread my writings further than I had ever hoped, and they have laid too deep hold on the souls of men. There is now much talent, education, and free judgment in our Germany: were I to retract, I should, in the opinions of my Germans, cover the Church with still greater shame; but it is

* Ecclesiam Romanam *pure* colant. The double meaning appears intentional, and seems a cunning device of Miltitz.

my opponents who have brought disgrace in Germany upon the Romish Church." He concludes his letter politely. "Do not doubt my readiness to do more, if it should be in my power. May Christ preserve your Holiness. M. Luther."

There is much concealed behind this measured reserve. Even if the conceited Eckius had not immediately after stirred up the indignation of the whole university of Wittenberg, this letter could hardly have availed at Rome as a sign of repentant submission.

The thunderbolt of excommunication was launched; Rome had spoken. Luther, now restored to himself, wrote once more to the Pope; it was the celebrated letter, which, at the request of the indefatigable Miltitz, he antedated, the 6th of September, 1520, in order to ignore the bull of excommunication. It is the noble expression of a determined spirit which contemplates its opponent from its elevated position, grand in its uprightness and noble in its sentiments! He speaks with sincere sympathy of the Pope, and of his difficult position; but it is the sympathy of a stranger: he still mourns over the Church, but it is evident that he has already passed out of it. It is a parting letter written with cutting sharpness and confidence, but in a tone of quiet sorrow, as of a man separating himself from one whom he had once loved, but found unworthy.

Luther had in the course of these years become quite another man; he had acquired caution and confidence in intercourse with the great, and had gained a dear-bought insight into the political and private character of the governing powers. To the peaceful nature of his own sovereign nothing could be more painful than this bitter theological strife, which, though sometimes advantageous to him politically, always disquieted his spirit. Continual endeavours were made at court to restrain the Wittenbergers, but Luther was always beforehand with them. Whenever the faithful Spalatinus warned him

against the publication of some new aggressive writing, he received for answer, that it could not be helped; that the sheets were already printed, already in many hands, and could not be withdrawn.* In intercourse also with his opponents Luther acquired the confidence of an experienced combatant. He was very indignant when in the spring of 1518, Jerome Emser had inveigled him at Dresden to a supper, at which he was obliged to contend with angry enemies; and still more when he heard that a begging Dominican had listened at the door, and had the following day reported all over the town that Luther had been put down by the number of his opponents, and that the listener had with difficulty restrained himself from springing into the room and spitting in his face. At the first interview with Cajetan, he placed himself humbly at the feet of the Prince of the Church; but after the second, he permitted himself to say that the Cardinal was as well suited to his business as an ass to play on the harp. He treated the polite Miltitz with corresponding civility; the Romanist had hoped to tame the German Bear, but the courtier himself was soon put in his proper position, and was made use of by Luther; in the disputation at Leipsic with Eckius, the favourable impression produced by Luther's unembarrassed, honest, and self-composed demeanour, was the best counterbalance to the self-sufficient confidence of his dexterous opponent.

But Luther's inward life demands a higher sympathy. It was a fearful period for him; he experienced together with a sense of elevation and victory, mortal anguish, tormenting doubts, and terrible temptations. He, with a few others, stood against the whole of Christendom, always opposed by

* That this happened designedly is betrayed in Luther's letter to Melancthon, 13th July, 1521: "I conjure you to be beforehand with the court, and not to follow its counsels. I have done this hitherto; I should not have effected half that I have done had I made myself dependent on its wishes."

the most powerful and implacable enemies; and these comprised all that he had from his youth considered most holy. What if he should be in error? He was answerable for every soul that he carried away with him. And whither was he taking them? What was there beyond the pale of the Church? —Destruction, temporal and eternal ruin. Opponents and timid friends cut his heart with reproaches and warnings, but incomparably greater was one pain, that secret gnawing and uncertainty which he dared not confess to any one. In prayer, indeed, he found peace; when his glowing soul soared up to God, he received abundance of strength, rest, and cheerfulness; but in his hours of relaxation, when his irritable spirit writhed under any obnoxious impressions, he felt himself embarrassed, torn asunder, and under the interdict of another power which was inimical to his God. From his childhood he had known how busily evil spirits hover around men, and from the Scriptures he had learned that the devil labours to injure even the purest. On his own path lurked busy devils seeking to weaken and entice him, and to make countless numbers miserable through him. He saw them working in the angry mien of the Cardinal, the sneering countenance of Eckius, and indeed in his own soul; and he knew how powerful they were in Rome. In his youth he had been tormented by apparitions, and now they had returned to him. Out of the dark shadows of his study rose the tempter as a spectre, clutching at his reason, and when praying, the devil approached him, even under the form of the Saviour, radiant as king of heaven, with his five wounds as the old Church represented him. But Luther knew that Christ only approaches weak man in his word, or in humble form, as He hung upon the cross; so by a violent effort he collected himself and cried out to the apparition: "Away with thee, thou vile devil!" then the spectre vanished.* Thus again and again for years did the

* 'Table Talk.'

stout heart of the man struggle with wild excitement. It was a gloomy conflict between reason and delusion; he always came out as conqueror, the primitive strength of his healthy character gained the victory. In long hours of prayer the stormy waves of excitement were calmed; his solid understanding and his conscience led him always from doubt to security, and he felt this expansion of his soul as a gracious inspiration from his God. It was after such experiences, that he, who had been so anxious and timid, became firm as steel, indifferent to the judgment of men, intrepid and inexorable.

He appeared quite another person in his conflicts with earthly enemies; in these he almost always showed the confidence of superiority, and especially in his literary disputes.

The activity he displayed from this period as a writer was gigantic. Up to the year 1517, he had published little; but after that he became not only the most copious, but the most popular writer of Germany. By the energy of his style, the power of his arguments, the fire and vehemence of his convictions, he carried all before him. No one had as yet spoken with such power to the people. His language adapted itself to every voice and every key; sometimes brief, terse, and sharp as steel; at others, with the rich fullness of a mighty stream his words flowed upon the people; and a figurative expression or a striking comparison made the most difficult things comprehensible. He had a wonderful creative power, and pre-eminent facility in the use of language; when he took his pen, his spirit seemed to emancipate itself: one perceives in his sentences the cheerful warmth that animated him, and they overflow with the magic creations of the heart. This power is very visible in his attacks upon individual opponents, and was closely allied to rudeness, which caused much perplexity to his admiring cotemporaries. He liked also to play with his opponents: his fancy clothed them in a grotesque mask, and he rallied, derided, and hit at this

fantastic figure, in expressions by no means measured, and not always very becoming. But the good humour which shone out from the midst of these insults had generally a conciliatory effect, though not upon those whom they touched. Scarcely ever do we perceive any small enmities, but frequently inexhaustible kindness of heart. Sometimes forgetting the dignity of the reformer, he played antics like a German peasant child, or rather like a mischievous hobgoblin. How he buffeted his adversaries! now with the blows of an angry giant's club, now with the rod of a buffoon. He delighted in transforming their names into something ridiculous; thus they were known in the Wittenberger's circle by the names of beasts and fools: Eckius became Dr. Geck,* Murner† was called Katerkopf‡ and Krallen; Emser, who had his crest (the head of a horned goat) engraved on every controversial writing, was insulted by being changed into Bock;§ the Latin name of the apostate Humanitarian, Cochläus, was translated back into German, and Luther greeted him as Schnecke (the snail) with impenetrable armour, and—it grieves one to say —sometimes as Rotzlöffel.‖ Still more annoying, and even shocking in the eyes of his cotemporaries, was the vehement recklessness with which he broke forth against hostile princes; the Duke George of Saxony, cousin to his own sovereign, was the only one he was occasionally obliged to spare. The profligate despotism of Henry VIII. of England was abhorrent to the soul of the German reformer, who abused him terribly, and he dealt with Henry of Brunswick as a naughty school-boy. It cannot, we fear, be denied that it was this alloy to the moral dignity of his character that acted as the salt, which made his writings so irresistible to the earnest Germans of the sixteenth century.

In the autumn of 1517, he had a controversy with the

* Geck is the German for coxcomb. † German for tom-cat.
‡ Cat's head and claws. § The buck. ‖ A little brat.

reprobate Dominican; in the winter of 1520, he burnt the papal bull; in the spring of 1518, he still laid himself at the feet of the Pope as the vicegerent of Christ; but in the spring of 1521, he declared before the Emperor, princes, and papal nuncios at the Imperial Diet at Worms, that he did not trust either in the Pope or the councils alone, but only in the witness of the Holy Scripture and the convictions of his own reason. He had now become a free man, but the papal interdict and the ban of the empire hung over him; he was inwardly free, but he was free like the wild beast of the forest, with the bloodthirsty hounds giving tongue after him. He had now arrived at the acme of his life: the powers against which he had revolted, and even the thoughts which he had excited in the people, began now to work against his life and doctrines.

It appears that already at Worms, Luther was warned that he must disappear for a time. The habits of the Franconian knights, among whom he had many faithful adherents, gave rise to the idea of carrying him off by armed men. The Elector Frederic planned the abduction with his confidential advisers; yet it was quite in the style of this Prince to arrange that he himself should not know the place of his confinement, that in case of necessity he might be able to affirm his ignorance. It was not easy to make this plan acceptable to Luther, for his valiant heart had long overcome all earthly fear, and with ecstatic pleasure, in which there was much enthusiasm and some humour, he watched the attempts of the Romanists who wished to take away his life; this, however, was under the disposal of another and higher power, which spoke through his mouth.* He unwillingly submitted;

* With what satisfaction he thought of his death appears from many passages in his writings—we give one—at the time of his residence at Wartburg, from the dedication of 'The Gospel of Ten Lepers,' the 17th September, 1521: "I, a poor brother, have again lighted up a new fire,

but however cleverly the abduction was arranged, it was not easy to keep the secret. In the beginning, Melancthon was the only one of the Wittenbergers who knew the place of Luther's concealment; but Luther was not the man to accommodate himself, even to the most well-meaning intrigue, and soon messengers were actively passing to and fro between the Wartburg and Wittenberg, so that whatever circumspection was employed in the care of the letters, it was difficult to prevent the spreading of reports. Luther in the castle, learned what was going on in the great world sooner than the Wittenbergers; he received accounts of all the news of his university, and endeavoured to raise the courage of his friends and to guide their politics. It is touching to see how he tried to strengthen Melancthon, whose unpractical nature caused him to feel bitterly the absence of his stronger friend. "Things must go on without me," Luther writes to him. "Only take courage and you will no longer need me; if, when I come out, I cannot return to Wittenberg, I must go out into the world. You are the men to maintain, without me, the cause of the Lord against the devil." His letters are dated from the "aërial regions," from "Patmos," from the "wilderness," "from among the birds who sing sweetly among the branches, and praise God day and night with all their

and have bitten a great hole in the Pope's pocket, because I have attacked confession. Where can I now remain, and where will they find brimstone, pitch, fire, and wood enough to pulverize the poisonous heretic? They must assuredly break open the church windows, for some holy fathers and ecclesiastical princes say that they must have air to proclaim the gospels, that is, to revile Luther, and to call out murder. What else can they preach to the poor people? every one must preach what he can. Only, death, death, death to the heretic! they scream out—as he would overturn all things, and overthrow the whole ecclesiastical order, upon which rests the foundation of Christendom. Now I hope, if I be accounted worthy, that they may kill me, and so fill up the measure of their forefather's sins; but it is not yet time, my hour is not yet come; I must first anger the serpent brood still more, and justly deserve death from them, that they may have cause to perform in me a great service to God."

powers." Once he endeavoured to be cunning: writing to Spalatinus, he enclosed a crafty letter, saying, that it was believed without foundation that he was at Wartburg. That he was living among faithful brothers, and that it was remarkable no one thought of Bohemia; it concluded with a not ill-natured thrust at Duke George of Saxony, his keenest enemy. This letter, Spalatinus, with pretended negligence, was to lose, that it might come into the hands of his enemies; but in such diplomacy Luther was by no means consistent, for no sooner was his lion nature roused by any intelligence, than he made a hasty decision to burst forth to Erfurt or Wittenberg. He bore with difficulty the tedium of his residence; he was treated with the greatest consideration by the commander of the castle, and this care showed itself chiefly, as was then the custom, in providing him with the best food and drink. The good living, the absence of excitement, the fresh air on horseback, which the theologian enjoyed, worked both on soul and body. He had brought with him from Worms, a bodily ailment from which arose hours of dark despondency, which made him incapable of work.

Two days successively he went out hunting; but his heart was with the poor hares and partridges, which were hunted by a host of men and dogs into a net. "Innocent little creatures! thus do the papists hunt." To preserve the life of a little hare he concealed it in the sleeve of his coat; then came the hounds and broke the limbs of the little animal within the protecting coat. "Thus does Satan gnash his teeth against the souls I seek to save." Luther had enough to do to defend himself and his from Satan; he had thrown off all the authorities of the Church, and now stood shuddering alone, only one thing remained to him, the Scriptures. The old Church had been continually expounding Christianity; traditions which were concurrent with the Scriptures, councils and decrees of the Pope, had kept the faith in constant agita-

tion. Luther placed in its stead the word of Scripture, which while it brought deliverance from a wilderness of erroneous soulless conceptions, gave threatenings of other dangers. What was the Bible? There were about two centuries between the oldest and the newest writings of the holy book. The New Testament itself was not written by Christ, nor even always by those who had received his holy teaching from himself; it had been compiled long after his death, portions of it might have been delivered incorrectly; all was written in a foreign language that Germans could with difficulty understand. Expounders of the greatest discernment were in danger of interpreting falsely if not enlightened by the grace of God as the Apostles had been. The old Church had brought to its assistance that sacrament which gave to the priest's office this enlightenment; indeed the holy father assumed so much of the omnipotence of God, that he considered himself in the right even where his will was contrary to the Scripture. The reformer had nothing but his weak human understanding and his prayers.

It was indeed imperative that Luther should use his reason, for a certain degree of criticism upon the Holy Scriptures was necessary. He did not set an equal value upon all the books of the New Testament: it is known that he had doubts about the Revelations of St. John, and he did not much value the Epistle of St. James; but objections to particular parts never disturbed his faith in the whole; his belief in the verbal inspiration of the Holy Scriptures (with the exception of a few books) could not be shaken; they were to him what was dearest on earth, the groundwork of his whole knowledge; he was so thoroughly imbued with their spirit, that he lived as it were under their shadow. The more deeply he felt his responsibility, the more intense was the ardour with which he clung to the Scriptures.* A powerful

* "I thank God, that I feel assured my doctrines are the word of God

instinct for what was rational and judicious helped him over many dangers; his penetration had nothing of the hair-splitting sophistry of the old teachers; he despised unnecessary subtleties, and with admirable tact he left undecided what appeared to him not essential. But if he was not to become a frantic or godless man, nothing remained to him but to ground his new doctrines on the words which were spoken and written fifteen hundred years before him, and he fell in some case into what his opponent Eckius called "Black-letter style."

Under these restraints his method was formed. If he had a question to solve, he collected all the passages in Scripture which appeared to him to contain an answer; he examined each passage to understand their mutual bearing, and thus arrived at his conclusions. By this mode of proceeding, he brought the Scriptures within the compass of an ordinary understanding; for example, in the year 1522, he undertook, out of the Holy Scriptures, to place marriage on a new moral foundation; he severely criticised the eighteen reasons given by ecclesiastical law, forbidding and dissolving marriages, and condemned the unworthy favouring of the rich in preference to the poor.

It was this same system which made him so pertinacious in his transactions with the Reformers in the year 1529, when he wrote on the table before him: "This *is* my body;" and looked gloomily on the tears and outstretched hands of

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and that I have been enabled to overcome grievous thoughts and temptations, when my heart tempted by Satan has said, 'Art thou the only one who holdest the word of God in truth and purity, and are others altogether without it?' 'Then again, when the devil finds me idle, and I am not thinking of the word of God, he troubles my conscience by the thought that I have disturbed the governments, and have occasioned much scandal and uproar; but when I lay hold of the word of God I win the game.'" Passages like this are to be found in many other places of the 'Table Talk.'

Zwinglius. Never had that formidable man shown more powerful convictions, convictions won in vehement wrestling with his doubts and the devil. It may be considered by some as an imperfect system; but there was a genial strength in it, that made his own view more available to the cultivation and heart-cravings of his time, than even he himself anticipated.

Besides these great trials, the proscribed monk at the Wartburg was exposed to smaller temptations: he had long, by almost superhuman spiritual activity, overcome, what great self-distrust led him to consider as merely sensual inclinations; still nature stirred powerfully in him, and he many times begged of his dear Melancthon to pray for him concerning this.

It happened providentially, that just at this time at Wittenberg the restless spirit of Karlstadt took up the subject of the marriage of priests, in a pamphlet in which he decided that vows of celibacy were not binding upon priests and monks. The Wittenbergers were in general agreed on this question, especially Melancthon, who was perfectly unbiassed, as he himself had never entered into holy orders, and had been married two years.

Thus a web of thoughts and moral problems was cast from the outer world upon Luther's soul, the threads of which enclosed the whole of his later life. Whatever joy of heart and earthly happiness was vouchsafed to him henceforth, rested on the answer to this question. It was the happiness of his home that made it possible for him to bear the trials of his later years; by that the full blossom of his rich heart was first unfolded. So graciously did Providence send to him, just in the time of his loneliness, the message which was to bind him anew, and more firmly than ever to his people. Again, the way in which Luther treated this problem is quite characteristic; his pious spirit and the conservative tendency of his character strove against the

hasty and superficial way in which Karlstadt reasoned. It may be assumed, that his own feelings made him suspicious as to whether this critical question was not made use of by the devil, to tempt the children of God; and yet the constraint upon the poor monks in the monasteries grieved him much. He examined the Scriptures, and easily made up his mind as to the marriage of priests; but there was nothing in the Bible about monks: "Where the Scripture is silent, man is unsafe." It appeared to him, withal, a laughable idea that his friends could marry, and he wrote to the cautious Spalatinus: "Good God, our Wittenbergers wish also to give wives to the monks! now they shall not so encumber me;" and he warns him ironically: "Have a care that you also do not get married;" yet this problem occupied him incessantly. Men live fast in great times. Gradually, by Melancthon's reasoning, and we may add by fervent prayer, he arrived at certainty. What, almost unknown to himself, brought about the decision, was the perception that it had become wise and necessary for the moral foundation of social life, that the monasteries should be opened. For nearly three months this question had been struggling in his mind; on the 1st November, 1521, he wrote the afore-mentioned letter to his father.

Unbounded was the effect of his words on the people; they produced a general excitement: out of almost all the cloister doors monks and nuns slipped away; it was at first singly and by stealth, but soon whole monasteries and convents dissolved themselves. When Luther in the following spring returned to Wittenberg, his heart full of anxious cares, the fugitive monks and nuns caused him a great deal of trouble. Secret letters were forwarded to him from all quarters, chiefly from excited nuns who had been placed as children in convents by harsh parents, and being now without money or protection, looked to the great Reformer

for help; it was not unnatural that they should throng to Wittenberg. Nine nuns came from the foundation for noble ladies at Nimpschen, amongst them were a Staupitz, two Zeschau, and Catherine von Bora; besides these there were sixteen other nuns to take care of, and so forth. He was much grieved for these poor people, and hastened to place them under the protection of worthy families. Sometimes, indeed, it became too much of a good thing, and the crowd of runaway monks especially annoyed him. He complains: "They desire immediately to marry, and are unfit for every kind of work." He gave great scandal by his bold solution of this difficult question; and there was much that was very painful to his feelings; for amongst those who now returned in tumult to social life, though there were some high-minded men, others were coarse and dissolute. Yet all this did not for one moment make him turn aside; he became, according to his nature, more decided from opposition. When, in 1524, he published the history of the sufferings of a nun, Florentina von Oberweimar, he repeated in the dedication what he had so often preached: "God often testifies in the Scriptures that He desires no compulsory service, and no one can become his, who is not so in heart and soul. God help us! Is there nothing in this that speaks to us? Have we not ears and understanding? I say it again, God will not have compulsory service; I say it a third time, I say it a hundred thousand times, God will have no compulsory service."*

Thus Luther entered the last period of his life. His disappearance in the Thuringian forest had made an immense sensation. His opponents, who were accused of his murder, trembled before the indignation which was roused against them, both in city and country. The interruption, however, of his public activity was pregnant with evil to him; as long as he was at Wittenberg, the centre of the struggle, his

* 'An Account of how God helped an Honourable Nun,' 1524, p. 4.

word and his pen could dominate the great spiritual movement both in the north and south, but in his absence it worked arbitrarily in different directions, and in many heads. One of Luther's oldest associates began the confusion, and Wittenberg itself was the scene of action of a wild commotion. Luther could no longer bear to remain at the Wartburg; he had already been once secretly to Wittenberg; he now returned there publicly, against the will of the Elector. Then began an heroic struggle against old friends, and against conclusions drawn from his own doctrines. His activity was superhuman; he thundered incessantly from the pulpit, and his pen flew over the pages, in his cell. But he was not able to bring back all the erring minds, neither could he prevent the excitement of the people from gathering into a political storm. What was more, he could not hinder the spiritual freedom which he had won for the Germans, from producing, even in pious and learned men, an independent judgment upon faith and life, which was often opposed to his own convictions. Then came the dark years of the Iconoclastic and Anabaptist struggle, the Peasant war; and the sad dispute about the Sacrament. How often at this time did the figure of Luther arise gloomy and powerful above the disputants! how often did the perversity of men and his own secret doubts, fill him with anxious cares about the future of Germany!

In this wild time of fire and sword, the spiritual struggle was carried on more nobly and purely by him than by any one else. Every interference of earthly power was hateful to him; he did not choose to be protected even by his own sovereign, and would not have any human support for his teaching. He fought with a sharp pen, alone against his enemies; the only pile that he lighted was for a paper: he hated the Pope as he did the devil, but he had always preached toleration and Christian forbearance towards papists;

he suspected many of having a secret compact with the devil, but he never burnt a witch. In all the Roman Catholic countries the stake was lighted for the confessors of the new faith, and even Hutten was strongly suspected of having cut off the ears of some monks; but so benevolent were Luther's feelings, that he had heartfelt compassion for the humbled Tetzel, and wrote him a consolatory letter. His highest political principle was obedience to the authorities ordained by God, and he never rose in opposition to them except when necessary for the service of God. On his departure from Worms, although on the point of being declared free from interdict, he was forbidden to preach; he did not, however, desist from doing so, but suffered great anxiety lest it should be imputed to him as disobedience. His conception of the unity of the Empire was quite primitive and popular; the reigning princes and electors, according to the laws of the Empire, owed the same obedience to the Emperor that their own subjects did to them.

During the whole course of his life he took a heartfelt interest in Charles V., not only in that early period when he greeted him as the "Dear youth," but even later, when he knew well, the Spanish Burgundian only tolerated the German reformation for political reasons: he said of him, "He is good and quiet; he does not speak as much in one year as I do in a day; he is the favourite of fortune:" he had pleasure in extolling the Emperor's moderation, discretion, and long sufferance; and after he had begun to condemn his policy, and to distrust his character, he still insisted upon his companions talking with reverence of the sovereign of Germany; for he said, apologetically, "A politician cannot be as candid as we ecclesiastics." In 1530 he gave it as his opinion, that it would be wrong in the Elector to arm in opposition to the Emperor: it was not till 1537 that he unwillingly adopted a more enlarged view; but even then, the

threatened Prince was not to take up arms first. So strongly in this man of the people still dwelt the honourable tradition of a firm well-ordered state, at a time when the proud edifice of that old Saxon and Frank empire was crumbling into ruin; but there was no trace of servile feeling in this loyalty: when the Elector on one occasion desired him to write a plausible letter, his truthful feeling revolted against the Emperor's title of "Most Gracious Sovereign," for the Emperor was not graciously disposed towards him; and in his intercourse with people of rank he showed a careless frankness that shocked the courtiers. To his own sovereign he had with all submission spoken truths as only a great character can speak, and to which only a good heart will listen. He had in general a poor opinion of the German princes, though he esteemed individuals among them; frequent and just are his complaints of their incapacity, licentiousness, and other vices:* the nobles too he treated with irony; the coarseness of most of them displeased him extremely.† He felt a democratic aversion to the hard and selfish lawyers who conducted the affairs of the princes, courted favour, and tormented the poor; to the best of them he allowed only a doubtful prospect of the grace of God: his whole heart, on

* We find a mild judgment of the Saxon court in his 'Table Talk,' 4: "I have again preached a sharp sermon at court against drinking, but it does no good. Taubenheim and Minkwitz say that it cannot be otherwise at court; for music and all knightly amusements have passed away, and nothing is thought of now but drinking. And truly our most gracious sovereign and Elector, John Frederic, is a gentleman of much strength, who can well stand a good drink; what he can bear would make another drunk. But when I return to him I will only beg of him to command his subjects and courtiers, on pain of severe punishment, to get very drunk; perhaps when it is commanded, they may do the contrary."

† The passage following the one just quoted is remarkable: "The nobles wish to govern, but have not the power, and understand nothing about it; but the Pope not only understands how, but has the power to govern: the weakest pope has more power to govern than ten nobles of the court."

the other hand, was with the oppressed: he blamed the peasants sometimes for their obduracy and their usuriousness, but he commended their class, regarded their vices with heart-felt compassion, and remembered that he sprang from them. These were his views on worldly government, but he served the spiritual: he held firmly the popular idea, that there should be two ruling powers,—the Church, and the princes, and he thought he was justified in proudly placing the domination of the former above that of worldly politics. He strove indignantly to prevent the governing powers from assuming the control in matters pertaining to the care of souls and to the autonomy of his communities. He estimated all politics with reference to the interests of his faith and according to the laws of his Bible. When the Scripture seemed to be endangered by worldly politics, he raised his voice, indifferent where it hit: it was not his fault that he was strong and the princes weak, and it ought to be no reproach to him, the monk, the professor, and the shepherd of souls, if the allied Protestant princes withstood the cunning statesmancraft of the Emperor, like a herd of deer; he himself was so conscious that politics were not his business, that when on one occasion the active Landgrave of Hesse would not follow ecclesiastical advice, he was the more esteemed for it by Luther: "He has a good head of his own; he will be successful; he thoroughly understands the world."

Since Luther's return to Wittenberg a democratic agitation had been fermenting amongst the people. Luther had opened the cloisters, and now people desired to be delivered from many other social evils, such as the destitution of the peasants, the ecclesiastical imposts, the malversation of the benefices, and the bad administration of justice. The honest heart of Luther sympathized with this movement, and he exhorted and reproved the landed proprietors and princes; but when the wild waves of the Peasant war poured over his own

country, when deeds of bloody violence wounded his spirit, and he found that factious men and enthusiasts exercised a dominion over the multitudes which threatened his doctrines with destruction, he threw himself with the deepest indignation into the struggle against the rough masses. Wild and warlike was his appeal to the princes; he was horrified at what had taken place: the gospel of love had been disgraced by the headstrong wilfulness of those who had called themselves its followers. His policy was right; there was in Germany, unfortunately, no better power than that of the princes; on them, in spite of everything, rested the future of the father-land, for which neither the peasant serfs, nor the rapacious noblemen, nor the dispersed cities of the empire, which stood like islands in the midst of the surging sea, could give a guarantee: he was entirely in the right; but in the same headstrong unbending way, which had hitherto made his struggle against the hierarchy so popular, he now turned against the people. A cry of dismay and horror was raised among the masses. He was a traitor. He, who for eight years had been their hero and darling, suddenly became the most unpopular of men: again his life and liberty were threatened; even five years afterwards it was dangerous for him to visit his sick father at Mansfeld, on account of the peasants. The anger of the multitude worked also against his teaching; the field preachers and new apostles treated him as a lost, corrupt man.

He was excommunicated and outlawed by the higher powers, and cursed by the people; even many well-meaning men had been displeased with his attack on celibacy and monastic life. The nobility of the country threatened to waylay the outlaw on the high-roads, because he had destroyed the convents in which, as in foundling hospitals, the respectable daughters of poor nobles were thrown in early childhood. The Romish party triumphed; the new heresy

was deprived of that which had hitherto made it powerful; Luther's life and doctrines seemed doomed to destruction.

It was at this time that Luther determined to marry. Catherine von Bora had lived at Wittenberg for two years in the house of Reichenbach, the town clerk, afterwards burgomaster. She was a fine young woman of stately manners, the deserted daughter of a noble family of Meissen. Twice had Luther endeavoured to obtain a husband for her, as with fatherly care he had already done for many of her companions; at last Catherine declared that she would not marry any man, unless it were Luther himself, or his friend Amsdorf. Luther was astonished, but he came to a rapid decision. Accompanied by Lucas Kranach, he went to woo her, and was married to her on the spot. He then invited his friends to his marriage feast, begged for venison from the court, which it was the habit of the prince to present to the professors on their wedding days, and received from the city of Wittenberg, as a bridal present, wine for the feast. We would fain understand what passed through Luther's soul at that time; his whole being was strained to the uttermost; his strong and wild primitive nature was excited on all sides; he was deeply shaken by the evils arising up everywhere around him, the burning villages and slaughtered men. If he had been a mere fanatic he would have ended in despair; but above the stormy disquiet, which is perceptible in him up to his marriage, a bright light shone; the conviction that he was the guardian of the divine law amongst the Germans, and that in order to protect social order and morals, he was bound to guide and not to follow the opinions of men. However eagerly and warmly he might declaim in individual cases, he appears now decidedly conservative and more firmly self-contained than ever. He had, moreover, the impression that it was ordained that he should not live much longer, and many were the hours in which he looked forward with a longing to

martyrdom. He concluded his marriage in full harmony with his convictions. He had entered fully into the necessity of marriage and its conformity with Scripture, and he had for some years pressed all his acquaintances to marry, at last even his own opponent the Archbishop of Mentz. He himself gives two reasons for his decision. He had robbed his father for many years of his son; it would be to him a kind of expiation, in case he should die first, to leave old Hans a grandson. Besides this, it was also an act of defiance; his opponents triumphed that Luther was humbled, all the world was offended with him, and by this he would give them still more offence.

He was a man of strong passions, but there was no trace of coarse sensuality; and we may assume that the best reason, which he did not, however, avow to any of his friends, was yet the most decisive, and that was, that there had long been gossip amongst people, and he himself knew that Catherine was favourably disposed towards him. "I am not passionately in love, but am very fond of her," he writes to one of his dearest friends. And this marriage, concluded contrary to the opinion of his cotemporaries, and amidst the derision of his opponents, was an act to which we Germans owe as much, as we do to all the years in which, as an ecclesiastic of the old Church, he had by deeds supported his theology. For from henceforth the father, husband, and citizen became also the reformer of the domestic life of his nation; and that which was the blessing of his earthly life, in which Roman Catholics and Protestants to this day have an equal interest, arose from a marriage contracted between an outcast monk and a fugitive nun. He had still, for one-and-twenty laborious years, to carry out the moulding of his nation. His greatest work, the translation of the Bible, which he had now brought to a conclusion, in union with his Wittenberger friends, gave him an entire mastery over the language of the

people, a language, the richness and power of which first became practically known by this book. We know in how noble a spirit he undertook the work: he wished to produce a book for the people, for that purpose he studied assiduously the forms of speech, proverbs, and technical expressions used by them. The Humanitarians still continued to write clumsy and involved German, a bad resemblance to the Latin style. The nation now obtained for its daily reading a work which in simple words and short sentences gave expression to the deepest wisdom and the highest spiritual treasures. The German Bible, together with Luther's other writings, became the groundwork of the new German language; and this language, in which our whole literature and spiritual life have found expression, is an indestructible possession, which, though marred and spoilt, has even in the worst times reminded the different branches of the German race that they belong to one family. Individuals are now discarding their native dialects, and the language of education, poetry, and science which was created by Luther is the bond by which the souls of all Germans are united. Not less was done by this same man for the social life of Germany. Private devotion, marriage, the education of children, corporate life, school life, manners, amusements, all feelings of the heart, all social pleasures were consecrated by his teachings and writings; everywhere he endeavoured to place new boundary stones and to dig deeper foundations. There was no sphere of human duty over which he did not constrain his countrymen to meditate. By his numerous sermons and essays he worked on the public; by countless letters in which he gave counsel and comfort to inquirers he worked on individuals. He urged incessantly upon all the necessity of self-examination, and the duty of being well assured what was owing from the father to the child, from the subject to the sovereign, and from the chief magistrate to his community; the progress he thus made was

important in this respect, that he freed the consciences of people; and in the place of outward pressure, against which egotism had haughtily rebelled, he substituted everywhere a genial self-control. How beautifully he comprehended the necessity of cultivating the minds of children by school instruction, especially in the old languages! How he recommended his beloved music to be introduced into the schools! How great his views were when he advised the magistrates to establish city libraries; and, again, how conscientiously he endeavoured to secure freedom of choice in matrimony! He had overthrown the old sacrament of marriage; but higher, nobler, and freer, he established the inward relation of man and wife. He had attacked the unwieldy monastic schools; everywhere in village and city, as far as his influence reached, flourished better institutions for the education of youth; he had removed the mass and the Latin chantings; he gave instead, to both disciples and opponents, regular preaching and the German chorale.

His desire to find something divine in all that was lovely, good, and amiable, which the world presented to him, always kept increasing. With this feeling he was ever pious and wise, whether in the fields, or in decorous gaiety among his companions, in his playfulness with his wife, or when holding his children in his arms. He rejoiced when standing before a fruit tree at the splendour of the fruit: "If Adam had not fallen, we might thus have admired all trees." He would take a large pear admiringly in his hands, and exclaim: "See, six months ago it was deeper under the earth than its own length and breadth, and has come from the extreme end of the roots; these smallest, and least thought of things are the most wonderful of God's works. He is in the smallest of his creations, even to the leaf of a tree or a blade of grass." Two little birds had made a nest in his garden, and flew about in the evening, being frightened by the passers-

by: he thus addressed them: "Ah, you dear little birds, do not fly away. I wish you well from my heart, if you could only trust me—though I own we do not thus trust our God." He had great pleasure in the companionship of true-hearted men; he enjoyed drinking wine with them, and conversation flowed pleasantly on both great and small matters; he sang, or played the lute, and arranged singing-classes. He delighted in the art of music, as it yielded innocent enjoyment. He was lenient in his judgment about dancing, and spoke with indulgence—fifty years before Shakespeare—of plays: "For they teach," said he, "like a mirror how every one should behave himself."*

Once when sitting with Melancthon, the mild and learned master Philip prudently moderated the too bold assertions of his vehement friend. Rich people were the subject of conversation, and Frau Kate could not resist remarking, eagerly, "If my husband had held such opinions he would have become very rich." Then Melancthon replied decidedly: "That is impossible, for those who thus strive after the good of the community cannot attend to their own interest." There was one subject, however, on which both men liked to argue. Melancthon was a great lover of astrology; Luther looked on this science with sovereign contempt; on the other hand, by his method of Biblical exegesis, and also by his secret political views, he had come to the conviction that the end of the world was near; and that appeared very doubtful to the sagacious Melancthon. When therefore the latter began with his signs and aspects of the heavens, and explained that Luther's success was owing to his having been born under the sign of the sun, Luther exclaimed: "I have no faith in your Sol. I am the son of a peasant; my father, grandfather, and ancestors have all been thorough peasants." "Yes," answered Melancthon,

* Luther's 'Table Talk.'

"but even in a village you would have become the leader, the magistrate, or the head labourer over all others." "But," exclaimed Luther, triumphantly, "I became a Baccalaureus, a master, and a monk; that was not written in the stars: after that, I quarrelled with the Pope, and he with me. I have taken a nun for my wife, and have had children by her; who has seen that in the stars?" Again Melancthon—continuing his astrological exposition—began to explain about the Emperor Charles; how he was destined to die in the year 1584. Then Luther broke out vehemently: "The world will not last so long, for when we have driven away the Turks, the prophecy of Daniel will be fulfilled, and the end of all things come, then assuredly the last day is at hand."

How amiable he was as the father of a family! When his little children were standing at the table watching eagerly the peaches and other fruit, he said, "Whoever wishes to see a picture of one who rejoices in hope, will see it truly portrayed here. Oh, that we could look as joyfully for the last day. Adam and Eve must have had far better fruits: ours are in comparison only like crabs. The serpent was then, I have no doubt, the most beautiful of creatures, amiable and lovely; it still has its crest, but after the curse it lost its feet and beautiful body." Looking at his little son, just three years old, who was playing and talking to himself, he said, "This child is like a drunken man; he does not know that he lives, and yet he enjoys life in security, jumping and skipping about." He drew the child towards him, and thus addressed him: "Thou art our Lord's little innocent, not under the law, but under the covenant of grace and forgiveness of sins; thou fearest nothing, but art secure and without cares, and what thou doest is pure." He then continued: "Parents always love their youngest children best; my little Martin is my dearest treasure: the little ones have most need of care and love, therefore the love of parents naturally

descends. What must have been the feeling of Abraham when he had to sacrifice his youngest and dearest son? he could not have told Sarah about it; this journey must have been a bitter one to him." His beloved daughter Magdalen lay dying; he laments thus: "I love her very much, but, dear Lord, as it is thy will to take her to thee, I am content to know that she is with thee. Magdalen, my little daughter, thou wouldst willingly remain with thy father here, yet gladly goest to thy Father yonder." The child then said, "Yes, dear father, as God wills it." As she was dying, he fell on his knees by the bed, weeping bitterly, and praying that God would redeem her. She then passed away in her father's arms. When the people came to bury her, he addressed them as was usual, saying, "I am joyful in spirit, but the flesh is weak; parting is beyond measure grievous. It is a wonderful thing, that, though feeling assured of all being well with her, and that she is at peace, one should yet feel so sorrowful." His *dominus*, or Herr Kate, as he used to call his wife in his letters to his friends, had soon become an apt and thrifty housewife. She had great troubles; many children, her husband frequently an invalid, a number of boarders (masters and poor students), always open house—as it seldom happened that they were without learned or distinguished guests, and in addition to all, a scanty income and a husband who preferred giving to taking; and who once during his wife's confinement got hold in his zeal of the baby's christening plate to give in alms.* From the way in which Luther

* For instance, in the year 1527, Luther could not lend eight gulden to his old prior and friend Briesger. He writes to him sorrowfully: "Three silver cups, marriage presents, have been mortgaged for fifty gulden, the fourth has been sold, and the year has produced a hundred gulden of debts. Lucas Cranach will no longer accept my security, that I may not be quite ruined."

Luther often refused presents, even such as were offered to him by his sovereign; but it appears that consideration for wife or children gave him in later times somewhat more of a household feeling. What he left at his

treated her, we see how happy his family life was, and when he made allusions to the glib chattering of women, he had no right to do so, for he was by no means a man who was himself scanty in words. Once, when his wife appeared much delighted at being able to serve up different kinds of fish from the pond in their little garden, the doctor was heartily pleased to see her joy, and did not fail to take the opportunity of making a pleasant remark upon the happiness of contentment. Another time, when he had been reading to her too long in the Psalter, and she said that she heard enough upon sacred subjects, that she read much daily, and could talk about them, "God only grant that she might live accordingly," the doctor sighed at this sensible answer, and said, "Thus begins a weariness of the word of God; new trifling books will come in the place of the Scriptures, which will again be thrown into a corner." But this close union between these two excellent persons was still for many years disturbed by a secret sorrow. We only learn what was gnawing at the soul of the wife, by finding, that when as late as the year 1527, Luther, being dangerously ill, took a last leave of her, he spoke these words:—"You are my true wedded wife, of that you may feel certain."

Luther's spiritual life was as much a reality to him as his earthly one. All the holy personages of the Bible were to him as true friends; through his lively imagination he saw them in familiar forms, and with the simplicity of a child he liked to picture to himself the various circumstances of their life. When Veit Dietrich asked him what kind of person he thought the Apostle Paul was, Luther answered quickly, "He was an insignificant, lean little man, like Philip Melancthon." He formed a pleasing image of the Virgin Mary: he

death amounted to about eight or nine thousand gulden; it consisted partly of a small landed property, a large garden and two houses, which undoubtedly he must chiefly have owed to Frau Kate.

used to say, admiringly, "She was a pretty, delicate maiden, and must have had a charming voice."

He preferred thinking of the Redeemer as a child with his parents; how he took his father's dinner to the timber-yard, and how when he had been absent too long, Mary asked him, "Where have you been so long, little one?"

The Saviour should be thought of, not as in his glory, nor as the fulfiller of the law, conceptions too high and terrible for man; but only as a poor sufferer, who lived among and died for sinners.

His God was to him entirely as father and head of the family. He liked to meditate on the economy of nature: he was filled with astonishment at the quantity of wood which God must always be creating. "No one can reckon what God requires to nourish merely sparrows and useless birds: in one single year they cost Him more than the income of the King of France; and then think of all that remains." "God understands all trades: as a tailor He can make a coat for the deer, which might last a hundred years; as a shoemaker He gives him shoes to his feet, and by means of the dear sun He is a cook. He could become rich indeed, if He chose, if He were to withhold the sun and air, and threatened the Pope, Emperor, bishops, and doctors with death, if they did not pay Him a hundred thousand gulden on the spot. He does not do this, yet we are thankless miscreants." He seriously reflected whence came the means of nourishment for so many men. Old Hans Luther had maintained that there were more men than sheaves of corn; the doctor indeed thought that there were more sheaves than men, but that there were more men than shocks. "A shock of corn, however, hardly yields a bushel, and that will not nourish one man a whole year." Even a dungheap was a subject of pleasant reflection to him. "God is obliged to clear away as well as to create; if He had not continually done so, the world would long ago have be-

come too full." "When God chastises the godly more severely than the godless, He deals with him as a strict father of a family with his son, whom he more frequently punishes than the bad servant: but he secretly collects treasures as an inheritance for his son, whilst he finally casts the servant off." Luther comes joyfully to this conclusion: "If God can forgive me for having during twenty years offended Him by saying mass, He can also excuse my having sometimes had a good drink to his honour—let the world think what it will."

It surprised him much that God should be so very wrath with the Jews. "For fifteen hundred years they have prayed fervently with great zeal and earnestness, as their little prayer-books show; and He has not revealed himself to them during the whole time by the smallest word. I would give two hundred florins' worth of books if I could pray as they do. It must be a great and unspeakable anger. Ah! dear Lord, punish me with pestilence, rather than be thus silent!"

Luther prayed like a child morning and evening, and often during the day, even indeed, during his meals. He repeated again and again with fervent devotion those prayers which he knew by heart. His favourite was the Lord's Prayer, and then he repeated the short catechism; he always carried the Psalter with him as a little prayer-book. When he was in extreme trouble his prayer became like a storm, a wrestling with God, the power, the greatness, and the holy simplicity of which can hardly be compared with any other human emotion. He was then the son who despairingly lies at the feet of his father, or the faithful servant who supplicates his prince. For nothing could shake his conviction that we may influence God's decisions by prayer and supplication. Thus overflowing feelings alternated in his prayers with complaints and even remonstrances. It is often related how, in

the year 1540, he restored to life the dying Melancthon at Weimar. When Luther arrived he found "*Magister Philippus*" at the point of death, unconscious and with closed eyes. Luther, struck with terror, said, "God forbid! how has this organ of God been marred by the devil!" Then he turned his back on those assembled, and went to the window as he was wont to do when he prayed. "Now," said Luther, "must the Lord God stretch forth his hand to me, for I have brought the matter home to Him, and dinned in his ears all his promises as to the efficacy of prayer, which I could repeat from the Holy Scripture, so that He must hearken to me if I am to trust his promises." Then he took Melancthon by the hand, saying, "Be comforted, Philip, you will not die:" and Melancthon, under the spell of his powerful friend, began at once to breathe again, and recovered his consciousness. He was restored.

As God was to Luther the source of all good, so was the devil the producer of all evil and wickedness. He considered that the devil interfered destructively with the course of nature by illness or pestilence, deformity and famine. All that this deep-thinking man preached so firmly and joyfully had formerly pressed with fearful weight upon his conscience; especially when awaking in the night, the devil stood full of malice by his bed, whispering horrors in his ear; then his spirit wrestled for freedom, often for a length of time in vain. It is extraordinary what this son of the sixteenth century went through in these inward struggles. Every fresh inquiry into the Scriptures, every important sermon upon a new theme, threw him again into this strife of conscience: then he reached such a state of excitement that his soul became incapable of systematic thought, and for whole days he trembled with anguish. When he was occupied with the question of monks and nuns, a text of the Bible startled him, which he thought, in his excitement, placed him in the

wrong: his heart died within him, and he was nearly strangled by the devil. At this time Bugenhagen visited Luther, who showed him the threatening text.* Bugenhagen, probably infected by the eagerness of his friend, began also to doubt, unconscious of the greatness of the misery which it occasioned Luther. Now was Luther indeed terrified, and again passed a fearful night. The next morning Bugenhagen came back. "I am very angry," he said; "I have now, for the first time, understood the text rightly; it has quite another sense." "And it is true," said Luther later, "it was a ridiculous argument; ridiculous indeed for one who is in his right mind, and not under temptation."

He often lamented to his friends, over the terrors which these struggles with the devil occasioned him. "He has never been from the beginning so fierce and raging as now, at the end of the world. I feel him well. He sleeps much nearer to me than my Kate; that is to say, he gives me more disquiet than she does pleasure." Luther never ceased to abuse the Pope as antichrist, or the papal system as devilish. But whoever observes more accurately, will perceive behind this hatred of the devil, the indestructible reverence by which the loyal spirit of the man was bound to the old Church. What became to him temptations, were often only the pious recollections of his youth, which stood in striking contrast to the changes he had gone through as a man.

Indeed, no man is entirely transformed by the great thoughts and deeds of his manhood. We ourselves do not become new through new actions; our inward life consists of the sum of all the thoughts and feelings which we have ever had. He who has been chosen by fate to create the new by the destruction of the old, shatters in pieces at the same time a portion of his own life: he must violate lesser duties to fulfil greater ones. The more conscientious he is, the more

* It is in Timothy v. 11, and has no reference to this question.

deeply he feels the rent which he has made in the order of the world, and also in his own inward nature. This is the secret sorrow, and even the regret, of every great historical character. Few mortals have felt this grief so deeply as Luther; and that which was so great in him, was his never being prevented by this feeling from acting with the utmost boldness.

This appears to us a tragical moment in his inward life; and equally so was the effect of his teaching upon the life of the nation. He had laid the foundation of a new Church upon the pure Gospel, and had given greater depth and substance to the minds and conscience of the people. Around him burst forth a new life, greater general prosperity, many new arts, improvements in painting and music, comfortable enjoyment, and more refined cultivation in the middle classes. Yet there was a something gloomy and ominous which pervaded the German atmosphere. Fierce discord raged amongst princes and governors. Foreign powers were arrayed against the people, the Emperor from Spain, the Pope from Rome, and the Turks from the Mediterranean; enthusiasts and factious spirits were powerful, the hierarchy had not yet fallen. Had his gospel given greater unity and power to the nation? The discord had become only greater, and the future of his Church seemed dependent on the worldly interests of individual German princes. And well he knew what even the best among them were. Something terrible seemed approaching, the Scripture would be fulfilled, the last day was at hand. But afterwards God would raise up a new world, more beautiful, more splendid, and more pure, full of peace and blessing; a world in which there would be no devil; where the soul of man would find more enjoyment in the flowers and fruit of the new heavenly trees, than the present race do in gold and silver; where music, the most beautiful of all arts, would give birth to tones more entrancing than the most splendid song of the best singers of this world;

and where good men would find again all that they had loved and lost.*

Ever more powerful became in him the longing of the creature after an ideal purity of existence. If he expected the end of the world, it was the dim traditions of the German people from the distant past which still veiled the heaven of the new Reformer; and yet it was at the same time a prophetic presentiment of what was at hand. It was not the end of the world which was approaching, but the Thirty years' war.

So he died. As the hearse bearing his corpse passed through the country of Thuringia, the bells tolled in every village and town, and the people pressed sobbing round his coffin. A large share of German popular strength was buried with this one man. Philip Melancthon, in the church of the castle at Wittenberg, standing before the corpse of Luther, said: "Every one who has known him well must bear witness that he was a truly good man; gracious in speech, friendly and lovable; not in the least insolent, violent, obstinate, or quarrelsome; and yet there was an earnestness and boldness in his words and bearing befitting such a man. His heart was true, and without guile; the harshness which appeared in his writings against the enemies of his doctrine, did not arise from a quarrelsome or bad spirit, but from his great earnestness and zeal for the truth. He showed great courage and manliness, and did not allow himself to be easily frightened. He was not dispirited by threatenings and danger. He possessed such a lofty and clear understanding, that in confused, dark, and difficult circumstances, he could see sooner than others what was to be counselled and done. He was not, as some perhaps have thought, so heedless as not

* Thus he speaks in many parts of the 'Table Talk.' His last conversation at the supper-table of Mansfelder, in Eisleben, a few hours before his death, was on the subject of meeting again with father, mother, and friends in the next life.

to have remarked how it fared everywhere with the governments. He knew right well in what government consists, and paid assiduous attention to the opinions and will of the people with whom he had to do. Let us have a constant and undying remembrance of this our beloved father, and keep him ever in our hearts."*

Such was Luther, a superhuman nature; his mind was ponderous and sharply defined, his will powerful and temperate, his morals pure, and his heart full of love. As besides him no other powerful spirit arose strong enough to become the leader of the nation, the German people have lost for centuries the supremacy over the world; their supremacy in the realm of mind rests however upon Luther. That he may in conclusion speak for himself, we will give a letter to the Elector Frederic the Wise, written at the time when Luther's whole powers were most strongly developed. The prudent prince had commanded him to remain at Wartburg, because he could not protect him at Wittenberg, as the anger of the Duke George of Saxony would lead him to insist immediately upon the carrying out of the ban of the empire against Luther. Luther then writes to his sovereign:—

"Most Serene Highness, Illustrious Elector, and Gracious Sovereign! Your Electoral Highness's letter and gracious remembrance of me, reached me on Friday evening, when I was preparing to leave on Sunday morning. I need truly neither proof nor witness that your Electoral Highness's intentions are for the best, for I am as fully convinced thereof as any human being can be.

"Yet in this matter, Gracious Sovereign, I must answer thus: your Electoral Highness knows, or if you do not know, permit me hereby to make you acquainted with it, that I have not received the gospel from man, but from heaven alone,

* This discourse was spoken in Latin, and immediately afterwards translated into German by Gasper Creutzinger.

through our Lord Jesus Christ, so that I may, and indeed from henceforth will, boast and sign myself a servant and evangelist. If I have presented myself for trial and judgment, it was not because I doubted the truth, but from overflowing humility, and to persuade others. I have done enough for your Electoral Highness in leaving my place vacant for a whole year for the sake of your Electoral Highness. The devil knows well that I have not done it from fear. He saw what a heart I had when I came to Worms; for if I had known that as many devils were lying in wait for me as there were tiles on the roofs, yet I would have rushed into the midst of them with joy.

"Now the Duke George is very unlike even a single devil. And since our Father, in his unfathomable mercy, has, by his gospel made us joyful lords over death and all devils, and has given us such a fullness of assurance that we may call Him 'Dearly beloved Father,' your Electoral Highness can yourself judge that it would be the greatest offence to such a Father if we did not so trust Him as to be above the anger of Duke George. For my part I know well, I would gladly ride into his own Leipzig—I hope your Electoral Highness will forgive my foolish jesting—even though it should rain, proud Duke Georges during nine following days, and every one should be ninefold more furious than this one. He considers my Lord Christ only a man of straw; this my Lord and I can well bear with for a time. But I will not conceal from your Electoral Highness that I have not once only, but often prayed and wept for Duke George, that God would enlighten him. I will still once more pray and weep for him, but after that never more. And I beg of your Electoral Highness to help and pray also that we may turn from him the evil, which, God help him, weighs incessantly upon him. I would at once strangle Duke George with a word if it could be thus removed.

"I have written thus to your Electoral Highness, with the intention of making known to you that I come to Wittenberg under a far higher protection than that of the Elector. I also do not intend to request the protection of your Electoral Highness, for indeed, I think I could better protect your Electoral Highness than you could protect me. So much so, that if I knew your Electoral Highness could protect me, and would do so, I would not come. It is not the sword which can counsel or help in this business; it is God alone who can act, without any human assistance; therefore he who has most faith will have most power to protect.

"As I therefore perceive that your Electoral Highness is as yet weak in faith, I can in no wise regard your Electoral Highness as the man to protect or deliver me.

"As your Electoral Highness desires to know what you shall do in this business, especially as you think that you have done too little, I answer, with all due submission, that your Electoral Highness has done too much, and should do nothing. For God will not allow of our cares and doings; He will have every doing left to himself, to himself and no other. May your Electoral Highness act accordingly.

"If your Electoral Highness believes this, you will have security and peace; if you do not, I do, and must leave your Electoral Highness in your unbelief, to torment yourself with the anxieties which all unbelievers deservedly suffer. As, therefore, I will not obey your Electoral Highness, you will be excused before God if I should be imprisoned or put to death. Towards men your Electoral Highness ought thus to conduct yourself. You should as Elector be obedient to the supreme authority, and should allow the Imperial majesty to rule in your towns and provinces, over persons and property, in conformity with the laws of the empire, and should not attempt to prevent or oppose, or make any

hindrance or resistance to this power if it should seize and kill me. For no one should resist authority, he excepted by whom it has been established, otherwise it is revolt, and against God. But I hope that your Electoral Highness will be reasonable, and perceive that you are in too high a position to become my gaoler. If your Electoral Highness keeps the door open, and grants a free escort in case my enemies themselves or their emissaries should come to seize me, you will have done enough for obedience-sake. They cannot indeed demand more of your Electoral Highness, than to learn the residence of Luther in your Electoral Highness's dominions. And that, they shall do without any care, work, or danger on the part of your Electoral Highness; for Christ has not yet taught men to be Christians to the injury of others.

"If, however, they should be so unreasonable as to command your Electoral Highness to lay hands on me yourself, I will then tell you what is to be done: I will secure your Electoral Highness from injury and danger to person, property, and soul, in what concerns me. Your Electoral Highness may or may not believe this.

"Herewith I commend your Electoral Highness to God's grace; of anything further we will speak when it is needful. For I have written this in haste, that your Electoral Highness may not be troubled by the report of my arrival, for I must comfort and not injure any one if I would be a true Christian. I have to deal with quite a different man to Duke George: we know each other well. If your Electoral Highness would have faith, you would see the glory of God; but because you have not yet faith, you have not seen it. Love and praise be to God in eternity. Amen. Given at Borna by the messenger, Ash Wednesday, anno 1522.

"Your Electoral Highness's most obedient servant,

"MARTIN LUTHER."

CHAPTER VII.

GERMAN PRINCES AT THE IMPERIAL DIET.
(1547.)

LUTHER was dead. Over his grave raged the Smalkaldic war. Charles V. made a triumphal progress through humiliated Germany.

Only once did these two men confront each other—these great opponents whose spirits are still struggling in the German nation,—the Burgundian Hapsburger and the German peasant's son—the Emperor and the professor;—the one, who spoke German only to his horse; the other, who translated the Bible and formed the new German language of literature;—the one, the predecessor of the Jesuit protectors and the originator of the Hapsburger family politics; the other, the forerunner of Lessing the great German poet, historian, and philosopher.

It was a moment in German history pregnant with fate, when the young Emperor, lord of half the world, spoke at Worms the disdainful words,—"That man shall not make me a heretic." For then began the struggle between his house and the spirit of the German nation. A struggle of three centuries; victory and defeat on both sides; its final issue not to be doubted.

When the German princes and lords of the Empire, with the envoys from the free cities, rode to the Diet, they assembled to transact business with the two rulers of Germany. These two rulers were the Pope and the Emperor.

The Pope ruled in the holy Roman Empire of the German nation, not only as chief bishop in his spiritual capacity, but equally as a political power. A third of Germany was under the rule of ecclesiastical princes, who had at least to be confirmed by the Pope. The greatest part of his income he drew from the Empire; his legates sat at the Imperial Diet, among the ecclesiastical and temporal Electors, and could even open it without the Emperor.

When the Emperor would not confirm the Count Palatine Frederic the Victorious in the Electoral dignity, this temporal prince accepted the confirmation of the Pope. The Pope endeavoured to bring every difficult political negotiation before his court; indeed, he granted rights of custom, he annulled the Imperial ban, and ventured by his own power to exact tithes.

The Emperor was still considered the nominal centre of the Empire, and the source of all power. All hastened, upon his accession, to obtain from him the confirmation of old freedoms and privileges, and he was the first judge and first general of the Empire, but could not raise a single thaler of money or a single soldier without the consent of the Diet. And what was of still greater importance, he could only obtain taxes and soldiers from among the vassals, by the consent of their feudal lords. Hesitatingly and sparingly did the Diet grant subsidies, and so defective was the payment that the grant became a mere farce.

Within the Empire, Electors, princes, nobles, and Imperial cities ruled their territories, with many gradations of sovereign rights. The greater princes were real sovereigns, their power only restricted by their states. Noble families, holding temporal principalities in heritable possession, strove incessantly to enlarge their power, to put down the smaller lords round them, and to limit the sovereign rights of the Emperor. In the fifteenth century they had reduced the

Imperial power almost to a shadow. It was only by extending the power of his house that the Emperor Maximilian was able to maintain himself against them.

We may easily perceive that there were two ways of remodelling this clumsy state edifice of the middle ages. In one case the power of the great princes might rise so high, that the temporal influence of the Pope and the supremacy of the Emperor would be overthrown; then Germany would be divided into a number of individual states, whose conflicts, wars, and destinies might for centuries throw the whole of central Europe into weakness and confusion, and which at last, in another state of development, might lead to new endeavours to restore unity to the Empire. It has been the fate of Germany up to the present time to follow this dangerous path.

In the other case, the Emperor might have succeeded in adding to the old groundwork of his power, such real strength, that the opposition of all the ruling princes would be broken, and Germany gradually changed into a modern state, that would either enclose the individual governments in perfect unity, or at least concentrate all the highest powers of government in the hand of one ruler. To form such a state, the Hapsburgers of the sixteenth century, and with more wilful obstinacy those of the seventeenth, have striven to the injury of the German nation and themselves; yet in the year 1519, when Maximilian died, the prospect opened to an able prince was grand, though the power of his house was moderate.

The time had arrived when a German Emperor might raise his power above the heads of all the princes, and with irresistible strength overthrow every opponent; for just at that time a new power arose in Germany, imperative in its demands, and capable of the greatest results,—public opinion. The Reform movement in the Church combined also within it the germ of great political reforms. Had an Emperor

arisen who would have sympathized with the needs of the German spirit, who would have united himself with the Reformation, and known how to raise it for his own aims in an exalted spirit, he would have had it in his power to form out of the Empire a new state and a united German Church: it was the highest prize that ever was offered to an ambitious prince; and how favourable would have been his position! The nation was deeply roused against the hierarchy and Romish influence, and the Reformation began with a struggle against the highest of the ecclesiastical electors. Three Electorates, more than seventy Imperial dignities, comprising the largest third of the whole country of Germany, were in the hands of ecclesiastical lords, who would all have fallen had the Reformation been undertaken by the Emperor and people. The Emperor would have found in the movement, powers which would have made his Imperial army irresistible; the evangelical preachers could not in a moment have transformed awkward peasants into skilled soldiers; but they might have infused into the armies of the Emperor, much of the enthusiasm and reckless daring which the best among them made proof of in their own lives; besides which, comprehensive ideas of political reform sprang up in the circle of the Huttens and Sickingens; and a German Emperor might well have found in such ideas the means of reconciling the conflicting interests of peasants, citizens, and knights, at least sufficiently so to serve his own purposes. How could the German princes, disunited as they always were, have withstood an Emperor with such allies, strengthened by a well-established income, and leader of an army which for the first time since the Crusades would have been animated by a great idea? Good grounds would such an emperor have had to have respected old families: it would not have been necessary for him to take the Electoral crown from off their heads, but he might have reduced them to be dignitaries of one great

united empire, in which the highest jurisdiction and the power of the army would have been vested in him alone: the want of such a man was for centuries the misfortune of Germany.

It is difficult to do justice to the German princes of the sixteenth century; their position was unfavourable for the formation of their character and for the development of elevated political action. They were too great to be loyal vassals, but not powerful enough, with only moderate abilities, to conduct the affairs of the nation in a liberal spirit. They were for the most part pretentious *Junkers;* their selfishness appeared to foreigners rapacious, their manners rude, their greed insatiable.

The private life of many of them was stained by the blackest crimes; a few of them were at heart pious; their religion was, we hope, a restraint in the hour of temptation, but it did not contribute to enlarge their political views. There was a patriarchal feeling among many of them. Such were Frederic the Wise and his next successor; such also was the Margrave Ernest of Baden, who used to have condemned criminals brought to him before their execution, that he might give them comfort from the Gospel, and beg for their forgiveness (as he felt obliged to fulfil his duty), and who offered them his hand at parting. Besides men of this kind there were others, overbearing, profligate, and wicked; such was Duke Ulrich of Würtemberg, who stabbed Hans Hutten in the forest because he wished to obtain possession of his wife. But though at most of the courts consideration for wife and children compelled a certain degree of moderation, the ecclesiastical princes were not even under this restraint. They were in the worst repute, and the more athletic preferred the helmet and the hunting-spear to the vestments of the Church, which some of them wore very awkwardly. There were bishops and archbishops who hardly

knew the ritual of their Church. Once when a Latin discourse was to be made, it appeared that the highest princes of the Church could not speak that language, and the Margrave of Brandenburg was obliged to do it.

It was through princes like these that Charles, sovereign of Lower Burgundy and the Netherlands, King of Spain and Naples, Duke of Milan, and Lord of the new world on the other side of the ocean, became also Emperor of Germany. It is well known how long and actively the intrigues both for him and the King of France were pursued. There was no Electoral house to which money or promises were not proffered by both parties, and none which did not negotiate for its own advantage. At last Frederic the Wise decided the election, and dear has his family paid for this decision. When the young king was crowned at Aix-la-Chapelle, where, to the great delight of the assembled multitude, he caused his horse to prance joyously before them, and when, after the coronation, the heralds proclaimed that the Emperor would, by permission of his Holiness the Pope, take the title of "Roman Emperor Elect," there were absent from the festive train the Electors of Saxony and Brandenburg, the Princes of the two houses which from henceforth were to lead the German opposition against the house of Hapsburg.

The fate of Germany was decided by the election of Charles V. He was not entirely a Burgundian, not always a Spaniard, not an Italian, and least of all a German. His position was too high, for him to make it the interest of his life to meet the requirements of any one of the many nations under his sway. The unfortunate part of his exalted position was, that he could only carry out a personal policy, subordinating sometimes one, sometimes another country to the course of his plans, the ultimate aim of which was the advantage of his own family. Had Charles been less able

and less moderate, what was insupportable in these incongruities would have been felt as a grievance by all his states; but seldom has a prince maintained so long, a position in itself untenable. At last, however, the catastrophe arrived. After thirty years of fame and success, he broke down, and the misery of Germany became apparent.

Although he had so little in common with the Germans, still he was not unpopular in the Empire. The people of Germany looked upon him as Luther himself did. The confiding attachment with which the Germans received the grandson of Maximilian was almost touching; his noble, reserved, and composed bearing had an imposing effect upon all. In the beginning the best was hoped of him, and later also, even the Protestants who had experienced his displeasure, rejoiced when he encountered the Pope or conquered the French King. Long did the German nation continue to feel itself exalted by the glory and splendour of his government. Charles did his best; he spared the prejudices of the Germans, indulged them more than any of his other people, and even when he sided with a party, he knew how to conciliate his opponents by his benevolent dignity. At last, however, the time came when his pride and pretensions rose so high that the intractable independence of the Protestant party became insupportable to him, and then his long concealed opposition broke forth into hate. Suddenly, a storm arose against him among the people. As in the first years of Luther, a sea of small literature again overflowed the country: they fought against him in prose and verse, and they depended more on the support of heaven than was wise. The successor of Duke George of Saxony, that most zealous opponent of the Reformation, the Protestant Maurice, united himself with the Emperor against his own family, and the Protestant party was defeated.

Now the Emperor Charles had attained the height of his

power; the battle of Mühlberg was won; the Smalkaldic league had fallen to pieces ingloriously. The Protestant princes and cities hastened to make their peace with that lord of half Europe, to whom in an evil hour they had been so eager to offer the dominion over them. Carrying away with him the captive Elector of Saxony and the Landgrave of Hesse, he marched from the Saale in triumphant procession to Augsburg, accompanied by his army of Spaniards, and Flemings, and German *Landsknechte*. There all the most powerful of Germany were gathered together at the Diet to obtain pardon or reward, to pay court to the most mighty sovereign that for centuries had ruled over Germany, to decide their own future and that of their Fatherland, and to seek pleasure and adventures. Amidst this crowd of sovereigns and dynasties, courtiers, swindlers, soldiers, and deputations of citizens, was one Bartholomew Sastrow, the son of a citizen of Greifswald. He was actively employed as agent of the Dukes of Pomerania, who were strongly compromised by their Protestant alliances, and preferred not to appear in person before the Emperor. In his biography (edited 1823) Sastrow has left some lively descriptions of what he experienced after the battle of Mühlberg, during the triumphal march of the Emperor to Augsburg and the Diet. The historical value of his narrative is not insignificant. He made good observations in his subordinate position, and had connections enough to be enabled to form a true conception of the character of the great lords; and however insignificant some of his anecdotes may be, they help, on the whole, to show men and great events in a new light. The following is a faithful quotation from his words, but from the lengthiness of his narrative parts only have been given.

"The Pomeranian councillors desired me to remain in the Imperial camp, and to put myself under the protection of George von Wedell. This Pomeranian nobleman had stabbed

his own cousin, and was in disgrace with Duke Barnim, but was now serving the Emperor with nine-and-twenty horse. Under my guidance he made himself so useful to the Pomeranian dukes, that Duke Barnim, at my earnest petition, restored him to favour, and reinstated him in his own property. Thus I remained with my steed at the Imperial court at Augsburg; how it fared with me on this march, and what I saw and heard, is here correctly recorded.

"It is customary in war for comrades to steal each other's horses, and they remain unpunished; the process is as follows. If any one likes another's horse, he pays a cunning stable-boy six or seven thalers to procure it for him; then it is sent away for five or six weeks that it may be forgotten; the tail, mane, and other marks are changed, and it is brought back to the camp. This was done in the Imperial camp at Halle by a German nobleman, who commissioned a boy to steal a Spanish steed for him, and having kept him for a few weeks at his home, thinking the rumour of it had died away, he had him brought back to the camp. Now it happened that about eight or more squadrons of German horse, were stationed in a beautiful meadow delightfully situated on the Saale; but the Spaniards were encamped on the heights round the castle. The stolen steed towards evening was taken to the river to drink; a Spanish boy recognizing it said, 'This belongs to my master, I will be off with it.' The German boy would not let him go; three or four German horsemen came to his assistance, ten or twelve to the Spaniard, then twenty or thirty to the German; thus both sides continued increasing, and at last they began to fire. The Spaniards being on the heights, had greatly the advantage over the Germans who were encamped below them; and shooting through their tents, they killed some of the noblemen who were sitting at table: the Germans on their side did not spare the Spaniards. The Emperor sent out a Spanish lord who was riding a splendid

charger, and was adorned with glittering golden chains, to pacify the German knights, and to quiet the uproar; upon which the Germans screamed out, 'Shoot down the Spanish miscreant!' When therefore he came on to the bridge to cross the Saale, his horse was killed under him, and he of the golden chains falling into the river, was drowned. Then the Emperor sent out to them King Ferdinand's son, the Archduke Maximilian, afterwards Roman Emperor, thinking that they would undoubtedly listen to him and be appeased; but they screamed all the same, 'Beat the Spanish miscreant!' whereupon one struck him on the right arm, and I saw how for some weeks after he carried his arm in a black sling. At last, the Emperor himself came out, and said, 'Dear Germans, I know you are not guilty; be satisfied; I will repair the damage you have suffered; and by my Imperial honour, to-morrow at daybreak I will have the Spaniards hung before your eyes.' Thus the uproar was quieted. The following day the Emperor caused an examination and valuation to be made of the damage done in both the German and Spanish camps; and as it appeared that only eighteen German squires and servants, together with seventeen horses, had been killed, whilst the Spaniards had lost seventy men, the Emperor sent word to the German knights that His Majesty would replace the value of their horses, and would not be disinclined to fulfil his promise of the day before, of hanging the Spaniards; but the Germans would themselves see now that the Spaniards had suffered fourfold, and that thus they had been sufficiently revenged; the Emperor therefore hoped, and had graciously decided, that the Germans should be satisfied and contented.

"On the evening of the 18th of June, the two Electors, Maurice of Saxony, and Brandenburg, took the Landgrave Philip of Hesse between them to Halle. On the following day, about six o'clock in the evening, he, together with his chancellor who was kneeling beside him, prostrated himself

in the great hall before the Emperor, in the presence of many lords, electors, princes, foreign potentates, ambassadors, counts, colonels, generals, and a large number of spectators, as many as the room could hold, and as many as could see through the window from without. But when the chancellor most humbly craved pardon, the Landgrave, who was a satirical gentleman, knelt, but laughed deridingly. Then the Emperor pointed his finger at him and said with an angry look, 'Truly I will teach you to laugh;' which indeed was afterwards done.

"The Emperor proceeded from Halle to Naumburg, and remained there three days. When the Imperial army was assembled before Naumburg, and his Imperial Majesty was waiting before the gate, he wore a black velvet hat and a black mantle bordered with velvet two inches wide, but a shower of rain coming on, he sent into the city for a gray felt hat and cloak; meanwhile he turned his cloak, and holding his hat under it, exposed his bare head to the rain. Poor man! he who had tons of gold to spend, would rather expose his bare head to the wet than allow his cloak to be spoilt by the rain. The Spaniards always took the Landgrave a day's march before the Emperor; they were very disorderly and ill conducted, for they left their dead lying on the road which the Emperor had to pass, and behaved shamefully to men, women, and children.

"On the 1st of July he arrived at Bamberg. The Emperor made his entrance with a great concourse of people about midday; he was mounted on a little horse. In the suburb there was a street turning off to the right, and in the corner house was lodged the imprisoned Elector of Saxony, so that on one side he could look out into the fields, and on the other into the city. He was standing above at the window, to watch the Imperial procession; and when the Emperor approached the corner, he bowed lowly before him: the Emperor kept his eyes fixed on him as long as he could see him, and laughed deridingly.

"On the 3rd of July the Emperor fixed the 1st of September for the Diet to be held at Augsburg. The Spaniards carried away from the bishopric of Bamberg upwards of four hundred women, maidens, and maidservants to Nuremberg. From thence they sent them home again; the parents, husbands, and brothers had followed them to Nuremberg; fathers seeking their daughters, husbands their wives, and brothers their sisters, and there each one found his own again. Was not that a wicked nation? thus to act when war was over, in a friend's country, and in the presence of the Imperial Majesty, who nevertheless keeps very strict rule. Every evening where his tent was erected, he caused a gallows to be raised, and had them hung unsparingly; yet even that was of no avail.

"When he left Nuremberg, the Duke of Leignitz, who usually passed his nights in drunken revelry, for once rose early and rode to the Emperor's lodging, where he arrived at six o'clock, but found that the Emperor had already been gone two hours. The duke was too much ashamed to follow; but sent two of his councillors to Augsburg, and returned to his own country, where he continued his disorderly life. Once when he was very tipsy he commanded the councillors, at the peril of their lives, to put him into a tower and feed him with bread and water; and if they disobeyed him, he would have their heads off. They took him to a tower wherein there were already prisoners; he was let down into the hole where they were, and the keeper received orders not to let him out, and to feed him with nothing but bread and water. When he had outslept his drunkenness he roused himself, and began to talk with the prisoners, and called to the gaoler to set him free. The man told him it was strictly forbidden; but he made it known to the councillors, who temporized till the third day. The duke meanwhile did not desist from ordering the gaoler to beg the councillors to give

in and release him. Then they went to him in the prison, and heard him begging and entreating; but they told him what he had commanded them, on pain of having their heads cut off, and they knew that he would not trifle with them, and therefore dared not let him out. But as he promised by everything that was high and holy not to injure them, they released him.

"He continued his mad wild life until he ruined his people and country and his own health. He died, leaving his wife, who was a Duchess of Mecklenburg, and their children in the greatest poverty. His widow complained to the city councils that she was in great need, and knew not what to do, nor how to bring up her sons according to their position; and begged that they would assist her. So the council of Stralsund sent her some thalers by a special messenger.

"At the end of July, his Imperial Majesty arrived with the whole army at Augsburg; he had left the Landgrave with a troop of Spaniards at Donauwörth, but had brought the captive Elector along with him to Augsburg, and had quartered him in the house of Welser, in the wine market; it was separated from the Emperor's palace by two houses and a little street, and was close to our inn. The Emperor had a way made through the two houses, and a bridge made over the little street, so that he could pass from his rooms into those of the Elector. The latter kept house himself, and had his chancellor Minkwitz and his own attendants with him, so that no Spaniards need enter either his sitting, or his sleeping rooms. The Duke of Alva and other great lords of the Imperial court had free access to and held friendly intercourse with him, and enlivened him by their society. In the courtyard of the Elector's dwelling, which was built and furnished in princely style, there was a circus, where they threw the spear; he was also allowed to ride to any of the places of amusement and ornamental gardens, of which there

were many at Augsburg; and because from his youth he had always taken delight in fencing, and had been an adept at it when younger and more active, fencing-schools were erected for his pleasure; but the Spanish soldiers guarded him. Besides this, he was allowed to read books and so forth up to the end of the Diet, when he refused to accept the interim. But with the Landgrave at Donauwörth it did not fare so well; the Spaniards were all day long in his rooms. When he was at his window looking into the square, one or two Spaniards were always beside him, stretching out their necks as far as his. Armed Spaniards lay all night in his room, and when the watch was changed, and the new one came in with drums and fifes, those who had kept guard half the night uncovered the bed and said, 'See there, we deliver him to you; henceforth you must guard him.'

"Methinks that this was indeed keeping the promise made at Halle: 'Truly I will teach you to laugh.' His Imperial Majesty as soon as he arrived at Augsburg, caused a gallows to be erected in the middle of the city close to the Town Hall, in order to create terror, and near it also a platform on which the bowstring was administered; and directly opposite another, about the height of a middle-sized man, whereon people were broken on the wheel, beheaded, strangled, quartered, and the like.

"It was truly a warlike Diet, for there were already in the garrison ten companies of *Landsknechte*, besides the Spanish and German troops which the Emperor brought with him to Augsburg, who were encamped in the country round the city. But it was also a notable and stately Diet, for the Emperor and King were there, all the Electors in person, with large bodies of followers; the Elector of Brandenburg with his wife, the Cardinal of Trent, Duke Heinrich of Brunswick with his two sons Carl Victor and Philip, Margrave Albrecht of Culmbach, Duke Wolfgang, Palatine of the Rhine, Duke

Augustus of Saxony, Duke Albrecht of Bavaria, &c., Frau Maria, the Emperor's sister, and the daughter of his sister, the widow of Lorraine; the wives of the Margrave and of the Bavarian Duke; item; ambassadors of foreign potentates; besides these many bishops and abbots, numberless counts, barons, citizens of the Imperial cities, illustrious envoys, and excellent men. I must not forget Michael the Jew, who considered himself a great man, and rode through the streets on a well-caparisoned horse, splendidly attired, his neck covered with gold chains. He was always surrounded by ten or twelve of his servants, all Jews, accoutred as troopers. He was a distinguished-looking man, and it is said that his true father was a Count von Rheinfelden. The hereditary Marshal of Pappenheim, an old gentleman who could not see very distinctly, not only took off his hat, but also bent his knee to him, as he would to one greater than himself. When he found afterwards that it was Michael, he repented that he had shown such honour to a Jew, and exclaimed, 'May God confound thee, thou old rogue of a Jew.'

"Splendid banquets were held at the Diet, and there were dances almost every evening, both foreign and German. King Ferdinand especially was seldom without guests; they were always treated magnificently, with all kinds of pastimes and splendid dances. He had exceedingly fine music, not only instrumental, but also singing. Besides other diversions, he had always behind him a witty fool, whose powers he knew how to bring out, and to meet his lively sallies with a retort, his tongue was never still. I saw one evening at his house a dance, in which a Spanish gentleman, attired in a long closed robe, reaching to the ground, so that one could not see his feet, led out a young lady, and danced with her an *Algarde* or *Passionesa* (as they call it, I know nothing about it); he sprang about so wonderfully, and she likewise, and they went so well together, that it was a pleasure to see

them. His brother, the Emperor of Rome, on the contrary, gave no banquets, and did not even entertain his own attendants; when they accompanied him from the church to the chamber in which he dined, giving each of them his hand, he dismissed them, and placed himself alone at table. Neither did he talk; only once when he came out of the church into his chamber, he looked round, and not seeing Carlowitz,* he said to Duke Maurice, '*Ubi est noster Carlovitius?*' and when the latter answered, 'Most Gracious Emperor, he is somewhat unwell,' he called out to his doctor in Flemish, 'Vesali, you must go to Carlowitz; he is said to be somewhat unwell; see if you cannot restore him.' I have often seen the Emperor dine during the Diet, but he never invited his brother, King Ferdinand, to dine with him. The dinner was brought up by the young princes and counts, and there were always four courses, each consisting of six dishes, which were placed on the table before him, and the covers removed one by one; he shook his head at those which he did not desire, nodded when he wished to partake of one, and drew the dish towards him. The fine pies, game, and well-dressed dainties were sent away, and he would keep a roast pig, and calf's head, and suchlike: he did not allow it to be cut for him, nor did he often himself use the knife, except to cut many small pieces of bread as large as he could put into his mouth with each bit of meat. He then loosened with his knife, the corner which he liked best of the dish he wished to eat; he broke it with his fingers, held the dish under his chin, and ate in this primitive manner so neatly and cleanly that it was a pleasure to see him. When he wished to drink —and he only drank thrice during his meal—he nodded to his physicians, who were standing before the table; they went

* Christopher von Carlowitz, the confidant of the Elector Maurice of Saxony, whose counsels he secretly guided, was at that time, with good reason, the favourite of the Emperor, for it was he who directed the politics of his master.

forthwith to the treasury, where were kept two silver bottles and a crystal cup which held about a pint and a half, and filled the glass out of the two bottles; this he drank clean off, so that not a drop remained therein, and he had to take breath two or three times before he withdrew it from his mouth. He never spoke whilst at table, and though there were fools standing behind him, who cut all kinds of jokes, he did not heed them; at the utmost he twisted his mouth into a half-smile if they said something very amusing. He did not care that many should stand round to see an Emperor eating. He had a splendid choir, as well as instrumental music, which performed in the churches but never in his own rooms. The dinner did not last an hour; then everything was removed, and seats and tables put away, so that nothing remained but the four walls, hung on all sides with costly tapestry. When grace had been said before him, they handed him a little quill for a toothpick; then he washed himself and placed himself in a corner of the chamber at the window, and any one might come, and either present a written petition or speak themselves, and he told them on the spot where they might obtain an answer.

"There were fine doings also amongst the princes and lords, both spiritual and temporal. I was once looking on when the Margrave Albrecht was drinking and playing at the *Peilketafel*,* with other young princes and young bishops who were not born princes; they did not give each other their titles, but called mockingly, 'Shoot away, priest; what does it matter? you will never hit the mark;' and the bishop replied after an equally vulgar fashion. Young princes lay upon the ground with princesses and countesses, for they did not sit upon benches or seats, but costly carpets were spread

* Peilketafel, a long narrow board with a rim all round, and two little gutters on the sides; on it they played with little ironstones smoothed at the bottom.

about the rooms, whereon they could sit and stretch themselves comfortably. They squandered upon extravagant banqueting, not only what was in their exchequers and what they had brought to the Diet, which amounted to many thousand thalers, but they were obliged, with great difficulty and vexation and irreparable loss, to borrow enough to enable them to leave Augsburg with becoming style. The subjects of certain princes, particularly of the Duke of Bavaria, whose wife was daughter of the King of Rome, collected some thousand gulden only for play, which they made a present of to their lords, who lost it all.

"I often addressed petitions to the Bishop of Arras, Doctor Marquardt, and other councillors; but as I did not of my own accord find out what was usual to be done to gain favour in courts and great cities and with lords, Doctor John Marquardt cleverly gave me to understand that it would give him particular pleasure to possess a pretty little horse, whereon he might ride to the council, as was customary at the Imperial court; I wrote therefore to Pomerania, and they sent me a fine horse, with an order to have suitable riding gear made for it, and then to present it to the doctor, together with three large Portuguese pieces of gold, which the doctor gladly accepted without any hesitation. A great treasure of silver, gold, money, and money's worth of costly and rare goods, was presented to Herr von Granvella, whereby the Electors, princes, and cities thought to obtain his favour with his Imperial Majesty. He carried it on large waggons and strong mules along with him on his return home, and when he was asked what was on the waggons and mules, he answered, '*Peccata Germaniæ.*'

"At the earnest entreaties and supplications of the Electors of Saxony and Brandenburg, the Emperor fixed a day in December to decide the matter concerning the Landgrave of Hesse. Now the Elector Duke Maurice was intriguing with the Duchess of Bavaria, and on the Sunday morning before

the Monday on which the long-desired decision was to be given, he placed himself in a sledge, for it had frozen hard, and there was snow on the roads. Carlowitz came running to him from the Chancellery, and said, 'Whither will your Electoral Grace drive?' The Elector answered: 'I drive to Munich.' I was standing outside the gate, so that I and others who were near could hear all that passed. Carlowitz then said: 'Has your Electoral Grace forgotten that to-morrow his Imperial Majesty's decision will be given in the business so important to your Electoral Grace and to the Elector of Brandenburg?' The Elector replied: 'I will drive to Munich.' Then Carlowitz answered: 'You owe it to me that you have become an Elector of note, but you have conducted yourself so frivolously at this Diet, that you have brought on yourself the contempt of the distinguished persons of all nations, and of their Imperial and Royal Majesties.' As he was saying this, Duke Maurice touched his horses with the whip, and drove out of the gate. Carlowitz called out to him loudly: 'Go your way in the devil's name, and may God confound you in your driving and all else.' When the Elector returned from Munich, Carlowitz was on the point of starting for Leipzig, as he said the new year's fair was at hand, and he must needs be there, or he would lose some thousand thalers; so the Elector, wishing to retain him, was obliged to present him with that amount. Neither of the Electors appeared on the appointed day before his Imperial Majesty, nor was a decision come to on the matter of the imprisoned Landgrave. For as the drive to Munich, and the conversation betwixt Duke Maurice and Carlowitz, which had been held in open day in the streets, and heard by many, was not concealed from his Imperial Majesty, he considered the many entreaties of this prince more as mockery than earnest, and no further day was fixed upon to hear the cause.

The German Landsknechte of the garrison at Augsburg had not been paid for some months, and it was reported that the fine upon the Landgrave and the cities, out of which they were to have been paid, had been collected, but that the Duke of Alva had lost it at play with the imprisoned Landgrave, so they were kept long without their pay: then some of them fell upon the ensigns' quarters, seized flags, and marched thus with colours flying in battle order to the wine market. When the standard bearers were marching along in good order, an arrogant Spaniard, desirous of gaining honour, of deserving the favour of his Imperial Majesty, and of immortalizing his name, sprang upon the ensign, and tore the flag out of his hands. The ensign was followed by three men-at-arms, one of them struck this wretch in two like a carrot, according to the saying: 'He who seeks danger perishes therein.' When the Landsknechte reached the wine market there was a great running to and fro of the Spanish soldiers, who beset all the streets leading to the wine market, and carried off the imprisoned Elector to the Emperor's palace, for they feared he might be taken away: all the inhabitants, especially merchants and tradesmen, who had collected costly goods, silk stuffs, silver and gold, pearls and precious stones on the occasion of the Diet, were greatly afraid lest the city should be plundered, which might well have happened had the Landsknechte sought to pay themselves. There arose therefore wild cries, uproar, and running about; every one armed himself in earnest, citizens and strangers kept to their houses and apartments arquebuse in hand and their guns ready to fire, and every one did what he could for the protection of his own, so that the Diet might indeed have become an armed one.

"But the Emperor sent to the Landsknechte to inquire what they wanted, and they, holding their guns in the left hand, and in the right, burning matches close to the touchhole,

answered, 'Either money or blood?' Then the Emperor sent them word that they were to rest satisfied, as they should certainly be paid the next day. But they would not withdraw without the assurance that they would not be punished for having assembled in front of the Emperor's lodging. This the Emperor promised, so they withdrew, were paid the next day, and dismissed. But what happened? Some spies were sent out to mingle unperceived and travel for two or three days with the leaders of the Landsknechte, to find out whether they spoke ill or mockingly of his Imperial Majesty; if so, they were to call assistance and bring the men back prisoners to Augsburg. The second or third evening the Landsknechte had a jovial bout at an inn, for they had money in their pockets, and thought themselves as safe as if they were in the land of Prester John, and had no idea that there were traitors sitting with them: then they spoke of the Emperor in this fashion: 'Yes indeed! one ought to allow this Charles of Ghent to take soldiers and not to pay them! But we would have taught him better, and have paid him for it; may God confound him.' After these words they were seized, taken back to Augsburg, and hanged at Berlach on the gallows, and a tiny little flag stuck on the breast of each."— So far Sastrow.

By his account of the revolt of the German Landsknechte it may be seen how insecure was then the highest earthly power. A few years later the new Elector, Maurice of Saxony, was able in a moment by a sudden expedition to overpower the experienced master of foreign politics. Neither the Emperor nor any other prince maintained a large standing army; even the Imperial power stood on a rotten foundation, and the Emperor Charles was in a difficult position with respect to the German soldiery. However easy was the conscience of the Landsknechte, and however ready they were to sell themselves for money, they were yet not entirely without political tendencies.

Most of them were well disposed towards the Protestants, and even those who had helped to overthrow their comrades of the Saxon service at the battle of Mühlberg, discovered with vexation after the combat, that they had given a deadly blow to the Protestant cause. The memory of Luther was dear to them; but far deeper lay their hatred for the Spanish soldiers of Charles, that faithful invincible infantry who had bled for their king on the battle-fields of half Europe. The Emperor had himself excited the civil war in Germany; a few years later, the German soldiers marched defiantly against his anointed head. Most of the German princes, even the enemies of the Ernestine and Hesse, felt like these soldiers. The great Emperor had made an irreparable rent in the loose tissue of the German empire; for this had been no exercise of Imperial power, as once against the mad Würtemberger; but it was a civil war in its broadest acceptation; it was a personal struggle of the Hapsburger against the German princes. Henceforth the German sovereigns knew what they had to expect from their Emperor: the last respect for order and duty to the Empire vanished, and each had cause to look after his own interests. The only safety against the fearful power of the Hapsburger was to be found in alliance with foreign sovereigns. More bold became the intercourse with France, and whoever opposed the Emperor looked there for help. Maurice of Saxony and Albrecht of Brandenburg rose against the Emperor in alliance with France. The German general, Schärtlin, who was in the French pay, assisted in depriving Germany of Metz, Toul, and Verdun. The younger princes of Germany went to the courts of the Valois, the Guises, and the Bourbon, to acquire refinement and obtain money and rank in the army; and this was done not only by the Protestant princes, but also by the Roman Catholics and even ecclesiastical Electors. The overpowering influence of France on the fate of the Fatherland dates not from the time

of Richelieu, but from the wars of Charles V. The real disruption of the German empire dated from the battle of Mühlberg and the Diet of Augsburg; and however objectionable the alliance of these German princes with a foreign power may appear to us, it must not be forgotten, that it was owing to the un-German policy of the Imperial house. The destroyer of German self-dependence, the great Emperor, met with his punishment almost immediately. A very different man from the scrupulous and irresolute John Frederic, had received the electoral crown from Charles; his own disciple in self-seeking policy, with an overbearing character, without consideration, and secret in his resolves, like the Emperor himself. So Charles reaped what he had sown: the Landsknechte of Maurice drove him even to the last gorges of the Alps. The naked egotism of the Wettiner triumphed over the reckless policy of the great Hapsburger. What the lord of half Europe had striven for all his life, slipped out of his hands. Germany was not to be governed in his way; he had not been able to guide the great movement of the German mind, nor yet could he entirely destroy it. He had not succeeded in making the German princes serviceable to his house, nor had he been able to destroy their power. The far-seeing cautious player threw up his game, and quietly, as was his wont, laid down the cards. He himself, with a heavy heart, broke in two the power of his house.

This did not render the political position of Germany more hopeful. The life of Maurice also passed away like a meteor, and his wild associate Albrecht of Brandenburg died an early and miserable death.

Then followed the feuds of Grumbach and Cologne, the disputes of Jülich, and the disorders of Bohemia; one quarrel more contemptible than the other, and the leaders of both parties equally incapable. The end was the Thirty years' war.

CHAPTER VIII.

A BURGHER FAMILY.
(1488—1542.)

Our narrative descends from the highest sphere of German life to the lower circles, in the individual families of which the characteristic life of the time may be traced. A series of examples shall lead us from the hardships of the peasant to the life of the privileged classes.

From all times the peasantry have been the great source, from which fresh family vigour has ascended into the guilds of the cities and the closets of the learned. Therefore the basis of the prosperity of a people lies in the simple occupations of the peasant, in that human labour in which mind and body, work and rest, joy and sorrow, are regulated by Nature herself; whenever such labour is repressed, limited, and fettered, the whole nation becomes diseased. The destruction of the free peasant has more than once undermined the political existence of states, as for example in Poland; and indeed it caused the deadly weakness of the great Roman empire and the decay of the ancient world. The more abundantly and freely fresh vigour ascends from the lower strata into the higher circles, the more powerful and energetic will be the political life of the nation. And again, the less declining families are prevented, by artificial supports, from falling into the great mass of the people, the

more rapid and vigorous will be the ascent of those who are struggling upwards.

It was by favouring in a remarkable degree the rise of families out of this great source of national vigour, that the Reformation revived the youth of the nation. The abolition of enforced celibacy was one of the greatest steps towards social progress; it secures still the ascendency of the Protestant over the Roman Catholic districts. Up to the time of Luther, the greatest portion of the German popular strength which arose from the cottage of the labourer, was destined to wither beneath the consecrating oil. It is true the marriage of priests had never entirely ceased during the middle ages. There was even a cardinal who was regularly married; his wife established herself with him, in spite of the Pope and College of Cardinals, and was able, when weeping by the side of the corpse, to relate to the sympathizing Romans the astounding fact that her husband had been always true to her. And in Germany, the housekeepers of the priests, the *Papemeiers* of Reineke Fuchs, formed a numerous and not unpretending class. But the country priests were obliged to buy tolerance for such unions from the bishop and *curie*. But however the higher ecclesiastical authorities may have favoured such a system, it was considered as immoral by conscientious pastors, and some even had scruples as to the propriety of their celebrating the mass. But the people looked with hatred and scorn on these profligate unions, and one of the greatest evils was, that the children remained as long as they lived under the curse of their birth; hardly any branch of trade was open to them; even the guilds of artisans would not receive them. They became either working men or vagrants. Yet such lasting unions of the Roman Catholic priests were generally, in the time of Luther, a benefit to their parishes, for we see in hundreds of pamphlets how recklessly the roving sensuality

of the priests destroyed the family life of their parishes. With the Protestants, on the contrary, the ecclesiastical order became the medium by which the countryman rose to a higher sphere of activity. By his village life and little farm, the pastor became closely united with the peasantry, and was at the same time the preserver of the highest education of those centuries. So important has been the influence of the Protestant clergy on the intellectual development of Germany, that the ancestors, even to the third and fourth generation, of most of the great poets, artists, and learned men, and the intellectual members of the German bureaucracy, lived in a Protestant parsonage.

What follows will portray the life of a family which at the end of the fifteenth century migrated from the village to the city, and in the third generation became the ruling family in a great commercial town. It may be seen from this narrative, that though family life was not then deficient in hearty and naïve cheerfulness, yet the conception of life and duty was rough, and the amount of benevolence small, though family feeling was strong.

United with violence and robbery, we find the commencement of a very modern system of police; the first prosecutions on account of offences of the press.

We are to a certain extent aware that three hundred years ago, the life of individuals was of less value than now; but we shall yet learn with astonishment from the old narrative, how frequently deeds of violence and blood disturbed the peace of households. We find that in a quiet burgher family the grandfather was the victim of premeditated murder; the father killed another in self-defence, and the son was attacked on the public road by highwaymen, one of whom he killed, but was mortally wounded by the other. Lastly, it will interest many to observe how the great theologian who then divided Christendom into two camps, exercised an influence

as family counsellor even on the shores of the Baltic, and how by his word he brought the souls of strangers to obedience and reverence.

The following communications are again taken from the comprehensive autobiography of Bartholomäus Sastrow, Burgomaster of Stralsund. His own life was unusually varied and rich in experiences. He was sent, when a young man, with his elder brother to the Imperial Court of Justice at Spire, to manage his father's lawsuit and to seek a livelihood for himself. He was first in the service of lawyers, then of one of the commanders of the Order of St. John, and afterwards found his way to Italy, in order to wrest from the hands of the Romish ecclesiastics the heritage of his elder brother, who had been crowned with laurels and ennobled by the Emperor as an improvisatore in Latin poetry, and who afterwards, on account of an unfortunate love affair, had gone with a broken heart to Italy and died in the service of a cardinal.

The younger brother returned home from Italy in the midst of the confusion of the Smalkaldic war, entered into the service of the Pomeranian dukes, who sent him as political agent to the Imperial camp, and solicitor to the supreme court of judicature of the Diet of Augsburg. He then settled himself in Greifswald, and gained, as an expert notary, practice and wealth in Pomerania, removed to Stralsund, became Burgomaster there, and died at an advanced age in great repute as a skilful, cunning, hot-headed, and probably often hard and partial man. Thus he begins his narrative:—

"About the year 1488, my father, the son of Hans Sastrow, was born at Ranzin at the sign of the Kruge, which lies near the churchyard towards Anklam, and belongs to the *Junker* Osten zu Quilow. Now this Hans Sastrow by far surpassed the *Junker* Horne, who also dwelt at Ranzin, in wealth, comeliness, strength, and understanding, so that even before his marriage he could compete with them in the extent

of their land. Whereat the Hornes were sore vexed, and endeavoured to the utmost to work him shame, injury, and damage, and even to endanger his health and life. When he found that the enmity of the Hornes daily increased, he resolved to take himself and his family out of danger; and about the year 1487, he, settling his affairs in a friendly manner with his Junker, the old Hans Osten zu Quilow obtained the right of citizen at Greifswald, and there bought the corner house of Fleischhauerstrasse, opposite to Herr Brand Hartmann, and gradually conveyed his property from Ranzin to this new house. So that a year before my father's birth, he gave up his vassalage to the Ostens, and entered the burgher class.

"See now what happened! Mark well this atrocious murderous deed! In the year 1494 there was a christening feast at Gribow, which lies not far from Ranzin, to the right in going from Greifswald, and there one of the Hornes had a property. To this same christening feast my grandfather, Hans Sastrow, being invited as nearest relation, led by the hand his little son, my father, then about seven years old, along the road passing the church.

"The Hornes of Ranzin did not wish to lose this opportunity of giving him a parting valediction; and of putting in action what they had planned in their hearts for many years. So they rode to Gribow as if they wished to visit their cousin there; and in order to spy out the best opportunity, went to the christening feast, and placed themselves at the table where my grandfather sat, for they had fallen so low that they did not despise peasant fare and society. When the Hornes, late in the afternoon, were very drunk, they all got up and staggered to the stables. They fancied themselves alone; but one of my grandfather's relations standing in the corner of the stable, heard all that they were proposing to do: they were to hasten to their horses so soon as they should

perceive that my grandfather was about to depart, to waylay him and to beat him and his little son to death.

"The man came to my grandfather and told him what he had heard in the stable, and counselled him to start and go home while it was yet day. This my grandfather agreed to; he got up, took his little son, my father, by the hand, and proceeded towards Ranzin. But when he came to the coppice on the moor, which was overgrown with bushes and brambles, and about half way between Ranzin and Gribow, the murderous villains intercepted his path, trampled him down under their horses' hoofs, and wounded him so badly that they thought he was dead. They were however not satisfied therewith, but dragged him to a great stone, which even now lies on the moor, chopped off his right hand, and so left him for dead. But the boy, my father, had in the mean while crept along the moor and hidden himself in some bushes on a grass hill, so that they could not come near him with their horses, nor find him in the bushes, as it began to be dark.

"The other peasants had ridden after the Hornes, to see what they had done: they found the wounded man thus mangled, and fetched the boy from the moor: one of these ran to Ranzin and brought quickly a cart and horses, on which they placed the wounded man, who showed no signs of life, except that on their arrival at Ranzin he gave a last gasp and expired.

"The friends of the orphan boy, my father, sold the new house and turned everything into money, so that they amassed altogether about two thousand gulden. Few of the nobles at that period allowed their subjects to possess so much. These friends did their best by the boy, had him taught reading, writing, and arithmetic, and sent him to Antwerp, and afterwards to Amsterdam, that he might be fitted to become a merchant. When, having attained a right age, he returned home and took possession of his property, he bought at the

corner of the high street and Hundstrasse, directly opposite to the church of St. Nicholas, two houses and two shops. One of the former he turned into a dwelling-house, the other into a brewhouse, and one of the shops into a gateway, whereon he expended much cost and labour. Now as people were well pleased with his comely person, and he had good hopes of having a sufficient maintenance, my mother's guardian and nearest relations promised her to him in marriage.

"My mother was the daughter of Bartholomäus Smiterlow, the brother of the Herr Bürgermeister Nicholaus Smiterlow; she was a truly pretty woman, small and delicately formed, amiable and lively, free from pride, neat and domestic, and to the end of her life devout and God-fearing. In the year 1514 my parents were married, and in 1515 the good God gave them a son, whom they called after my paternal grandfather Johannes. In 1517 was born my sister Anne, the relict of Peter Frubos, Burgomaster of Greifswald. In 1520 I came into the world, and was named after my maternal grandfather, Bartholomäus.

"One of my five younger sisters, Catherine, was an excellent, amiable, lovely, faithful, and pious maiden. When my brother Johannes came home from Wittenberg, where he was a student, she bade him tell her how one could say in Latin 'That is truly a beautiful maiden;' he said '*Profecto formosa puella.*' She asked further how could one say 'rather so:' he replied, '*sic satis.*' Some time after, three students, sons of gentlemen, came from Wittenberg to see the town; they had been recommended by Christian Smiterlow to the hospitality of his father, the burgomaster Herr Nicolaus Smiterlow, who was desirous to entertain them well, and to have good society for them. As he had three grown-up daughters, my sister Catherine was invited, besides other guests. The students exchanged all kinds of jokes with the maidens, and also said to one another in Latin what it would not have been

seemly to say before maidens in German, as young fellows are wont to do. At last one said to the other '*Profecto formosa puella;*' whereupon my sister answered '*sic satis;*' then were they much afraid, fancying that she had also understood their former amatory talk. In the year 1544 she made a most unfortunate marriage with Christoph Meier, a coarse man, who wasted, idled away, and dissipated all that he had, even what he had received with my sister.

"My mother accustomed her daughters from their youth up, to suitable household work. Once when my sister Gertrude, who was about five years old, was sitting spinning at her distaff—for spinning-wheels were not then in use—my brother Johannes told her that his Imperial Majesty had summoned a Diet, where the Emperor, Kings, Electors, princes, counts, and great lords would be assembled: she inquired what they would do there, and he answered, 'That they would determine and decree what was to be done in the world.' Then the little maiden at the distaff gave a deep sigh, and said dolefully: 'Oh good God! if they would only decree that such little children should not spin.' This sister, together with my mother and two other sisters, Magdalen and Catherine, died in peace in the year '49, when the plague was raging: my mother went first, and as my sisters were weeping bitterly, she said to them when dying: 'Why do you weep? pray rather that God would in his mercy shorten my pain.' Some days after, my youngest sister Gertrude died: although my eldest unmarried sister Magdalen was herself nigh unto death, she rose from her bed, and laid out not only Gertrude's shroud and winding-sheet, but her own also, and desired that when Gertrude was buried, the grave should be left open, being only lightly covered with earth, that she might be laid next to her; she then returned to her bed, and lived till the next day after Gertrude was buried: so she died, the tallest and strongest of all my sisters, an

excellent, clever, and industrious housekeeper. This was written to me by my sister Catherine two days before her own death, who added, that it was even so with herself, that she was about to follow her mother and sisters, and that she did yearn for it, and she did admonish me not to grieve thereat.

"Now my parents when they were first married were comfortably established; their buildings were finished, they were prosperous, and possessed plenty of feathers, wool, honey, butter, and corn; they had their stately mill and brewery; when suddenly all this happiness changed into sorrow and misfortune: for in the same year 1523, George Hartmann, the son-in-law of Doctor Stoientin,* bought of my father a quarter of butter, and they came to angry words thereupon. Hartmann, who was going to carry a sword to Herr Peter Korchschwantz, went on his way to complain to his mother-in-law: she, who was haughty and very rich, had married a doctor, councillor to the prince, and looked down upon smaller people; she put an axe into his hand with these words: 'See, I give you a trifle, go to the market and buy yourself a heart.' He then met my father, who was without arms, and had not even his bread-knife with him, as he was going to have a pot of honey weighed at the weighing-place in the streets where the locksmiths lived. Hartmann, armed with sword and axe, fell upon him; my father springing into the house of one of the smiths, seized a spit; the boys tore it away from him, and also prevented him from using the ladder which was standing near the gallery; but he tore from the wall a hunting-spear, and running out into the street with it, called out: 'Where is he who wants to take my life?' thereupon Hartmann sprang out of the adjoining smith's house, having added to his former weapons a hammer from

* Valentin Stoientin, who had been the intimate of Ulrich von Hutten in their youth, was then ducal councillor, and an influential promoter of the Reformation.

the anvil, which he threw at my father, and though he parried the blow with the spear, yet the hammer glided along the spear and hit him on the breast, so that he spit blood for some days. Immediately after, Hartmann struck him with the axe on the shoulder; having now hit him with both hammer and axe, and fancying he had the best of it, he unsheathed his sword, and rushing at my father, ran on the spear, which went into his body up to the handle, so that he fell. This is the true account of this lamentable story; I know well that the adversaries maintain that my father stabbed Hartmann when he was hiding himself behind the stove in the smith's room, but it is a mere fable.

"My father hastened straight to the monastery of the Black Monks, with whom he was acquainted, and they took him into the church, up under the vaulted roof. Doctor Stoientin with many assistants and servants searched every corner of the monastery, and came also into the church. My father, thinking they saw him, was on the point of speaking out and entreating that they would spare him, as he was innocent and had only acted in self-defence; but the merciful God prevented him from speaking, and shut the eyes of his adversaries so that they could not see him.

"In the night the monks let him down over the wall, so that he could walk along the dyke to the village of Neukirchen. There my step-grandfather arranged that my father should go to Stralsund, in a cart that he had ordered from Leitz, concealed among some sacks of barley and fodder. Stoientin met the peasant in the night, and asked him where he was going. 'To Stralsund,' he said. He kicked at the sacks and inquired what load he was carrying. The other replied: 'Barley and fodder.' He then asked whether the peasant had not seen some one riding or running; the latter answered: 'He had seen one riding hastily towards the village of Horst, who had appeared to him like Sastrow from

Greifswald; and he had been astonished at his riding so hastily in the night.' So Doctor Stoientin left the peasant and rode to Horst; but my father arrived at Stralsund and obtained a safe conduct from the councillor there.

"But my father could not trust to this, as the deceased had himself been under the safe conduct of my gracious sovereign Duke George; and Dr. Stoientin, the councillor of his princely grace, made good avail of it against my father; besides this, the adversaries were rich, proud, and powerful. So he was obliged to wander about in Denmark, going also to Lübeck, Hamburg, and elsewhere, till he conciliated the reigning prince by a considerable sum, which he was obliged to pay in ready money.

"And although later, after repeated endeavours, and at the cost of much labour and exertion on the part of my step-grandfather, my father became reconciled with the offended party, upon the payment of blood-money to the amount of one thousand marks, he could not remain unmolested at Greifswald, on account of these adversaries residing there. But it may be seen how little this blood-money prospered with the son and heirs of the deceased, for evil and misfortune to person, land, and property pursued both wife and children.

"Thus my mother was left in her youth without a husband, to keep house with four uneducated children. One can well imagine how many sad and sorrowful thoughts weighed upon her.

"Whilst my mother was dwelling in Greifswald, I went to school there, and learnt not only to read, but also to decline, parse, and conjugate in the Donat. On Palm-Sunday I had to sing the '*Quantus*,' having sung the foregoing years first the lesser and then the great '*Hic est*.'*

* On Palm-Sunday it was the custom of the Catholics to draw to the churchyard a large wooden ass on wheels, with a figure of Christ as large as life upon it. After the consecration of palms the people streamed

"This was a great honour to the boy, and no small pleasure to his parents, for the most courageous scholars were always selected for it, who were not alarmed at the great multitude of ecclesiastics as well as laymen, and could sing the *Quantus* with a loud and clear voice.

"In the year 1528, when my parents discovered that the Hartmann party were not to be mollified, and would not let my father return to the town and to his business, they desired, as is becoming an honest couple, to bear the burden of housekeeping together, and thus my mother must needs follow my father. Therefore my father became a citizen of Stralsund, and bought a house there; my mother in the spring quitted Greifswald, sold her house, and settled near the Sound. About the same time my step-grandfather, who was then chamberlain at Greifswald, took me to his house, that I might study there. I however studied very little, for I preferred riding and driving with my grandfather to the neighbouring villages, so that I made little progress in my studies.

"In the year 1529, my mother being pregnant, wished to have a scouring and washing before her confinement, as is

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thither. The choir of scholars sang the words of the Evangelist, *Cum audisset populus, quia Jesus venit Hierosolymam, acceperunt ramos palmarum*, &c. Then eight of the scholars stepped forth, pointed to the ass, and sang aloud, *Hic est, qui venturus est* (the lesser *Hic est*); to this the choir responded, *In salutem populi.* Then eight other scholars pointed to the ass and sang, *Hic est salus nostra et redemtio Israel* (the great *Hic est*). Then eight other scholars knelt before the ass, clasped their hands over their heads, and sang, *Quantus est iste cui throni et dominationes occurrunt? Noli timere, filia Sion, ecce Rex tuus.* This already was a very grand performance for the scholars; but afterwards there came six other scholars who knelt down, their faces to the earth, clasped their hands of one accord over their heads, and sang the *Salve;* and when they had finished it they went forward three steps, knelt down again, and sang thrice, *Salve Rex, fabricator mundi*, &c. Then they drew the ass forwards, and so on. Faithfully given from a description of the solemnity, in the archives of St. Gallen, printed in Kessler's 'Life of J. J. Bernet.'

customary with women. Now my parents had at this time a servant-maid who was possessed with an evil spirit; it had hitherto not shown itself, but now, when she had to scour the numerous kitchen utensils, and took down the kettle and saucepan, she threw them on the ground in a dreadful way, and cried out, with a loud voice, 'I will away!' When therefore they found the reason of this, her mother, who dwelt in the Patinenmacher Strasse, took her home, and she was taken several times in a Riga sledge to the church of St. Nicholas. When the sermon was ended, the spirit was exorcised; and it appeared from its confession, that her mother having bought a fresh sour cheese, and placed it in the cupboard, the maiden had gone there in her absence and eaten of the cheese. Now when the mother saw that some one had been to the cheese, she had wished that person possessed of the evil spirit, and ever since, he had dwelt in the maiden. When he was then asked how he could have remained in the maiden, as since then she had received the sacrament, he answered, 'A rogue may lie under a bridge whilst a good man is passing over;' he had meanwhile been under her tongue. He was not only exorcised and expelled, but each and every one present in the church knelt down and prayed diligently and devoutly. He however, loudly scoffed at the exorcism, for when the preacher conjured him to go away, he said he would depart, he must forsooth give up the field; but he demanded that he might be allowed to take away with him sundry things, and if this demand were refused, he would be free to remain. One of those present having his hat on whilst praying, the evil spirit begged of the preacher to allow him to take off this hat; he would then depart, and carry it away with him. I feared that, had it been permitted him by God, the hair and scalp would have gone with the hat. At last, when he perceived that his time for vexing the maiden was passed, and that our Lord God listened mercifully to the prayers of the believers

present, he demanded mockingly a square of glass from the window over the tower clock, and when a pane was granted to him, it loosed itself visibly with a great clang, and flew away. After that time nothing evil was observed in the maiden. She got a husband in the village, and had children.

"I went to school, and learnt as much as my wildness would allow me: of intelligence there was sufficient in me, as may be observed, but steadiness there was none. In the summer I bathed with my companions on the sea-shore; this my uncle saw from his garden behind his barn, and told it to my father, who came in the morning with a good rod into the room, in front of my bed, whilst I was asleep; he worked himself up into a rage, and spoke loud in order to awake me. When I awoke, and saw him standing before me, and the rod lying on the next bed, I knew well what was in the wind, and began to pray and entreat—weeping bitterly. He asked what I had done? I swore I would never again, all my life long, bathe in the sea. 'Yes, sir,' he said (when he called me 'sir,' I knew well that matters stood badly between us), 'if you have bathed, then I must use the mop.' Thereupon he seized the rod, threw my clothes over my head, and gave me my deserts. My parents brought up their children well. My father was somewhat hasty, and when his temper got the upper hand, he knew no moderation. Once when he was in a rage with me,—he was standing in the stable, and I in the doorway,—he caught hold of the pitchfork and threw it at me. I sprang aside, but it had been thrown with such violence, that the prongs stuck deep into one of the oaken tubs of the bathroom, and it required great strength to draw it out. Thus the merciful God hindered the evil designs of the devil against me and my father. But my mother, who was exceedingly gentle and tender, sprang forward in such cases, saying, 'Strike harder, the good-for-nothing boy has well deserved it!' But at the same time she would lay hold of

the hand in which he held the rod, so that he might not strike too hard.

"My father's house was still very unfinished, and an outhouse was built against it, with its entrance close to the well. A miller dwelt therein named Lewark-Lark,—who had many naughty children that cried day and night. At daybreak these young larks began to chirp, and continued the whole day, so that one could neither see nor hear until my father drove out the old larks with their young ones, pulled down the outhouse, and set to work in earnest to finish the whole house at great cost of labour and money. My parents received from Greifswald a considerable amount of cash; for my mother had been obliged to turn everything into money, so that many called him the rich man of the Vehr Strasse. But in a few years this appeared very doubtful, for my parents had great anxiety and loss of money, and also hindrance to the hoped-for happiness of their children as well as other detriment.

"For there were then in Stralsund two women who might not unjustly be called swindlers; the one was named Lubbe Kesske, the other Engeln; they both dwelt in the Altbüsser Strasse. They bought divers kinds of cloth from my father, which they again sold to others, but it was not known to whom. Sometimes they paid part of the money for the cloth; but whenever they gave a hundred gulden, they straightway bought to the amount of two hundred or more. When, however, his claim upon them became very large, the women only being able to pay twenty gulden, he inquired what had become of his property; he found that his goods to the amount of seventeen hundred and twenty-five gulden had gone to the wife of the tailor Hermann Bruser, who had a considerable traffic in cloth, being able to sell it cheaper in retail than other cloth merchants; and that his eight hundred gulden had found their way to the mother of Jacob Leweling.

When my father called to account the two women and the wife of Bruser, the latter and her husband, Hermann Bruser, offered to pay: Bruser assured my father under his hand and seal that at fixed terms he would make the payment. See what happened! The first term was due at the time of the uproar of Burgomaster Herr Nicholaus Smiterlow, and Hermann Bruser, who was one of the principal ringleaders, thought it was now all over with my father, as well as with the burgomaster; so he disclaimed his bond, refused payment, and began a lawsuit with my father which lasted more than four-and-thirty years; my father came to terms with the heirs of Bruser, who had to pay for one and all a thousand gulden. The debt itself had amounted to seventeen hundred and twenty-five gulden, and my father's costs to upwards of a thousand more. Thus my father was deprived of his money for forty years; great inconvenience accrued to both parents and children. I thereby lost my studies and my brother, Magister Johannes, even his life, so that one may in truth say, that Hesiod's words, 'The half is more than the whole,' may well be applied to a lawsuit, particularly to one at the Imperial court, so that it would be more profitable to be satisfied with the half in the beginning than to obtain the whole by the sentence of the Imperial court.

"During the lawsuit my brother Johannes became Magister at Wittenberg, where he was the first among thirteen, and my parents summoned him home. Before his departure from Wittenberg, he begged of Dr. Martin Luther to write to my father, as the latter, on account of his lawsuit with Hermann Bruser, had abstained for some years from the Lord's table.* The letter was thus worded:—

* The father Sastrow did not go to the communion from a conscientious feeling, because he would not fulfil the condition of forgiving his enemies.

'To the honourable and discreet Nicholaus Sastrow, burgher of Stralsund; my kind and good friend, *Gratia et Pax.*

'Your dear son Magister Johannes has made known to me with touching lament, my dear friend, how you have abstained from the Sacrament for so many years, giving a scandalous example to others, and he has begged me to exhort you to give up such a dangerous practice, as we are not sure of life for a moment. So his filial, faithful care for you his father has moved me to write to you, and I give you my brotherly and Christian exhortation (such as we owe to one another in Christ) to desist from such a practice, and to consider that the Son of God suffered far more and forgave his crucifiers. And finally, when your hour comes, you will have to forgive as does a thief on the gallows. If your cause before the court lingers on, let it proceed, and wait for your right. Such things do not prevent us from going to the Sacrament, else we and also our princes could not attend, as the cause betwixt us and the Papists still lingers on. Commit your cause to justice, and meanwhile make your conscience free, and say, "Whoever shall be judged in the right, let him be considered so, in the mean time I will forgive those who have done the wrong, and go to the Sacrament." Thus you will go not unworthily, because you desire justice and are willing to suffer wrong, however the judge's sentence may fall. Take kindly this exhortation which your son has so earnestly begged from me. Herewith I commend you to God. Amen. Wednesday, after Miser., A.D. 1540.

'MARTINUS LUTHER.'

"My children will find the original of this letter in its place with other important documents, and will no less carefully than myself preserve it as an autograph of that highly enlightened, holy, dear, and of the whole world praiseworthy

man, and will love, and value, and keep it as a pleasant remembrance for their children and children's children.

"This letter my brother brought home to my father, and in order that his parents might see that their money had not been spent in vain, he brought with him also some of his Latin poems which had been printed. In the following years he applied himself with industry at home to his private studies. For besides other poems at Rostock, he published at Lubeck an elegy on the Christian martyr Dr. *Robert Barns*,* which had a tragical result for both the printer and himself. For the poem came to the knowledge of the king of England, who sent an envoy to the city of Lubeck with bitter complaints and threatenings, as the poem had been published by their printer Johann Balhorn. The dignitaries of Lubeck made excuses for the author, although he did not dwell there nor belong to their jurisdiction, as he was only a young fellow who wished to give proof of his learning; but the publisher, Johann Balhorn, was sent out of the city, and had to leave it by break of day. They thereby appeased the king's anger, and after some months allowed Balhorn to return to the city.

"But my brother, Magister Johann, when he was travelling home from Lubeck to Rostock had as companions Herr Heinrich Sonneberg and a female, and besides there rode near the carriage Hans Lagebusch and a smart young fellow, Hermann Lepper, who had exchanged *boguslawische schillinge* and other money for some hundred gulden coined in Gadebusch, and which lay in the carriage. This was discovered by certain highwaymen, as thievish miscreants are called. Highway robbery was very common in Mecklenburg, as it was never seriously punished, and many nobles even of the highest

* *Querela de ecclesia. Epicedion Martyrus Christi, D. Roberti Barns, Angli. Authore Joanne Sastroviano.* Lubecæ, 1542, 8; directed against Henry VIII. of England, who in tolerable distichs was compared to Busiris and similar ancient characters.

birth were engaged in it; so that one may truly say with the poet:—

'Nobilis et Nebulo parvo discrimine distant:
Sic nebulo magnus nobilis esse potest.'

Nevertheless the genuine nobility, among whom are many honourable men, who are in all ways worthy of esteem, are not spoken of here. Now, thank God, there is a careful superintendence exercised in the Duchy of Mecklenburg; but then the highwaymen could say, if we give up three hundred gulden we place ourselves out of all danger, and can always keep the remaining two hundred. When the travellers came to the Ribbenitzer heath, those who were sitting in the carriage alighted from it, having their arms with them; and the two horsemen, who ought to have remained by it in that insecure place, rode forward. Against these the highwaymen collected themselves, one of whom joined Lagebusch, and talked familiarly with him. When riding so near to him that he could reach the stock of his pistol, which was cocked (it was not then the custom to carry double barrels in the saddle), he seized it out of the holster, and hastened therewith after Hermann Lepper, who was riding back to the carriage, and shot him, so that he fell from his nag. Hans Lagebusch took to flight, and rode to Ribbenitz; Herr Heinrich Sonneberg ran into the wood, and concealed himself among the bushes; my brother, who had a hunting-spear, placed himself against the hind wheel, that they might not attack him from behind; in front he defended himself, and kept off one after another, inflicting wounds on them, for he thrust his spear into the side of one of them near his leg, so that riding to the bushes he fell from his horse, which escaped, and he remained lying there. Another then fiercely attacked my brother, and cut a piece from his head the size of a thaler, and even a little bit of his skull, at the same time wounded him in the neck with his sword, so that he fell and

was considered dead. The miscreant plundered the carriage, took all that was therein, and also carried off the horse of their wounded comrade; as they saw he was so much wounded that there was little life remaining in him, and not being able to carry him away, they left him lying there. They left the driver his horses, and rode away with their booty. Herr Heinrich Sonneberg returned to the carriage; they laid my brother in it, and the woman bound up his head with her handkerchief, and held it in her lap. The dead body they laid at his feet, and thus drove slowly to Ribbenitz. There his wounds were dressed, and the surgeon put some plaster on his neck. A rumour of this came to Rostock. The councillor sent his servants to the spot, who found the wounded highwayman, and took him to Rostock; but, alas! he died as soon as they reached the prison, so that they could not learn who the others were. It did not, however, remain quite secret, but was hushed up by their connections, and the high magistrates did not in good earnest investigate the matter. The dead miscreant was however brought before the court, and from thence taken to the Landwehr to have his head cut off, which was placed on a pole, where it was to be seen for many years. Lagebusch brought the tidings to Stralsund, and the councillor sent along with my father a close carriage with four of the city horses; we took our beds with us, and starting in the evening, travelled all night through, so that we reached Ribbenitz early in the morning. We found my brother very weak, but we remained there on account of the horses; and had the deceased Hermann Lepper christianly and honourably buried, after an inquest had been held. Towards evening we left Ribbenitz, and drove at a foot's pace through the night, so that we reached Stralsund towards noon on the following day. When Master Joachim Geelhar, the celebrated surgeon, had properly dressed the wounds, the patient was soon thoroughly cured."

CHAPTER IX.

THE MARRIAGE AND HOUSEKEEPING OF A YOUNG STUDENT.

(1557.)

THE chief charm of the life of the olden time consists in the graceful manifestation of those feelings which give brightness to our life; the passions of lovers, the deep affection of husband and wife, the tenderness of parents, and the piety of children. We are enabled in each period of the past to distinguish the universal attributes of human nature, nay, even the specific German characteristics of love and marriage, but these tender relations are precisely those which are often enveloped in much that is transitory and enigmatical. We have often to seek mild and humane feelings under repulsive forms.

But two things have always been valued in Germany. In the first place it was a pre-eminent peculiarity of the Germans that they honoured the dignity of the female sex. Their women were the prophetesses of the heathen time, and, according to the laws of the people, whosoever killed a maiden or widow had to atone for it by the severest punishment. In times of strife and war, women enjoyed protection of person and property. Whilst Totila, Prince of the Goths, destroyed the men in Italy, the honour and life of the women were preserved, and the misbehaviour of a Goth to a Neapolitan woman was punished with death. It moreover appears from the Sachsenspiegel, that the same laws pre-

vailed in the North even during the time of the cruel Hussite wars.

Of all the misdeeds of the Spanish soldiers who accompanied Charles V. into Germany in the sixteenth century, their ill-treatment of women excited the greatest indignation. The infamous conduct of some Passau soldiers of the Archduke Leopold towards the women of Alsace, even in 1611, was particularly repugnant to the people, and was commented on in their news-sheets. It was not till the Thirty years' war that the coarseness became universal, and women were looked upon as the booty of licentious men.

This respect for women and chaste family life was considered by the Romans the highest quality of the Germans. Even Christianity, which spread from the Roman to the German countries, could not place women and marriage on a higher footing; on the contrary, its ascetic tendencies served to lower them. The full enjoyment of the pleasures of the world were no longer allowed to man; passionate devotion to a beloved husband was easily mistaken for a wrong to heaven and the holy Redeemer. On the other hand men fixed their eyes on the heavenly Virgin, whose especial favour they might win by despising the women of earth. At the time of the Saxon Emperors this tendency of the mind reached its highest point. In those days education was confined to the cloister; there the daughters of the nobility were educated; there men weary of sin retired; and there also, enthusiasm sought for the highest enjoyment of love, which seemed unattainable in marriage without danger to the salvation of the soul. Secret sensuality mixed even with the worship of the highest objects of faith.

But the heart of man could not long rest satisfied with ideal love in heaven. When, under the first Hohenstaufen, education, manners, and good taste were only to be found

among the feudal nobility, they hastened to transfer to the women of this world the devotion and veneration which had been exclusively confined to the Virgin Mary. The courtly worship of woman began, new conventional forms were introduced for the intercourse between man and woman, accompanied in Germany with a strong intermixture of Italian manners. The man had to give proof of his love by heroic deeds and adventures, and his lady-love was surrounded by an atmosphere of poetry, and veiled in ideal perfections, as we may perceive in the numerous minne-songs of that time. But neither the dignity of woman, nor the fundamental morality of marriage, was increased by this chivalrous devotion, and it became a cloak for reckless profligacy. Sometimes even a married woman had a knight devoted to her service; he was invested kneeling before his liege lady, and she, laying her hands between his, confirmed his allegiance by a kiss. From that time he wore her colours; he was bound to be faithful to her, and she to him, and in some cases they lived together as man and wife; and there were even instances in which the Church gave its sanction to these improper unions.

This knightly service often led men into the greatest follies. For instance, Pierre Vidal of Toulouse went about on all-fours in a wolf's skin, in honour of his lady, till he was beaten and bitten almost to death by the shepherds and sheep dogs; and Ulrich von Lichtenstein, who rode through the whole country in woman's clothes, challenging all the knights, and had his finger and upper lip cut off in honour of his lady, drank the water in which she had washed, and when he returned from his expeditions, was nursed by his wife. These are not the worst examples of the horrible eccentricities to which this knightly devotion led. The result was such as might be expected,—the glitter of romance soon disappeared, and coarse profligacy remained in its nakedness.

The Church did little to improve this state of things. There were individual popular preachers who courageously advocated marriage and chastity, but it was at this very time that the celibacy of the secular clergy was established, and that the mass of the people were reduced to bondage by the feudal lords. The purity of marriage and the happiness of families were not promoted either by the position of the village priest living in his parish without a legal wife, nor by that of the proprietor who had to give his sanction to marriages, received tribute on account of them, and even laid shameful claims on the person of the bride.

On the other hand there arose in the cities a fresh and vigorous life, and from the fourteenth century, the citizens became the best representatives of German cultivation and manners, as once the ecclesiastics had been, and afterwards the nobles. Owing to the close proximity of the dwellings in the city, and the smallness of their houses, the intercourse between man and woman became more strictly defined, and on the whole a practical sound conception of life took the place of chivalrous fancies; citizen habits followed courtly manners; ladies were won by cautious wooing instead of by daring heroic deeds; maidenly modesty attracted more than haughty assumption; instead of the wild knightly life of the nobles, which frequently separated man and wife, and violently severed the marriage tie, the woman now obtained a quiet sway in the well-regulated house, and the bold courtesy of the knight was replaced by a considerate, though strictly regulated and sometimes rather formal, expression of heartfelt esteem.

The conception of propriety and purity was different, however, from what it is now. At the time of the Council of Constance, the refined Poggio relates with great satisfaction how at Baden near Zurich, the most fashionable bath of the fifteenth century, he had seen German men and women bathing together, and how delightfully naïve their familiarity

was. And even a century later Hutten praises this German custom in contradistinction to the Italian morals, which would have made this practice impossible. So tolerant still were the German Humanitarians.

Marriage, however, was considered by our ancestors less as a union of two lovers, than as an institution replete with duties and rights, not only of married people towards one another, but also towards their relatives—as a bond uniting two corporate bodies. The relations of the wife became also the friends of the man, and they had claims on him as he had on them. Therefore in the olden time, the choice of husband and wife was always an affair of importance to the relatives on both sides, so that a German wooing, from the oldest times up to the last century, had the appearance of a business transaction, which was carried out with great regard to suitability. This perhaps takes away from German courtship, somewhat of the charm which we expect to find where the heart of man beats strongly; but this circumspect method of weighing things is a characteristic sign of an earnest and great conception of life. If a man desired to ask a woman in marriage he had to go through several solemn family negotiations. First the wooing, for which he had to employ a mediator; not always the father or any other head of his family, but often some man of consideration in the town or country. This ambassador was generally accompanied by the wooer himself with a troop of his companions: if it took place in the country, they rode in solemn procession. If the family of the maiden was favourably disposed, they considered this as the preliminary step, and fixed a time for the negotiations between the families to take place. Formerly the man had to buy his wife from her family; but when this old custom fell into disuse, there still remained the arrangements concerning the dowry which the bride had to bring to her husband, and the jointure which he had to settle upon her. There were added

to this, though not compulsory yet as a standing custom, presents of the man to the parents, brothers, and sisters of the bride, or from the bride to the family and best-men of the bridegroom. After this consultation, followed the betrothal, which had to take place in the presence of the rightful guardians: amidst the circle of witnesses, both parties had solemnly to declare that they would take each other in marriage; after which a ring was placed on the finger of the bride by the bridegroom; they embraced and kissed, thus showing the passing of the maiden into the family and guardianship of the man. After this betrothal, a certain space of time having elapsed, the termination of which was in many places legally fixed, the solemn fetching home of the bride to the house of the bridegroom took place. Again there was a solemn procession to the house of the maiden, and even if the bridegroom was present he was obliged to have a spokesman, who once more wooed her before the assembled family, and gave her over to the bridegroom; then she was taken in procession to the house of the latter, where the bridal feast was held. It was a bad custom in the middle ages, that this repast was got up with an extravagance which far surpassed the means of the bridal couple; and there were numerous police regulations endeavouring to limit the luxury in music, dishes, and the number of tables* and feast days.

Such was the marriage ceremonial of the Germans. The old custom of the bridal wreath, which was worn by both bride and bridegroom, was introduced into Germany from Rome. The consecration of marriage by the Church was only required from the time of the Carlovingians, and was seldom neglected by the nobility, but did not become general among the people till a later period. The Church had indeed raised marriage to the dignity of a sacrament; but a feeling

* The guests were counted by tables, twelve persons being generally reckoned to each table.

remained among the people that Christianity looked coldly and sternly on it. Even in the fifteenth century the consecration of marriage by the Church was not entirely established, nor does it take place to this day in many places before the fetching home of the bride.

In this respect also, Luther and the Reformation had a great influence. From the sixteenth century the consecration of marriage by the Church became in the Protestant countries the essential part of the ceremony; from that time the old customs of betrothals and of fetching home the bride were secondary considerations. It was not till after Luther and the Council of Trent, that marriage became intimately connected with the Christian faith in the German mind; for then the different confessions endeavoured, by educating and elevating the people, to make them comprehend the moral and domestic significance of marriage.

And how was it with the heart of lovers? The following example will show how true love germinated amidst all the various family interests.

Felix Platter, the son of Thomas Platter, burgher, printer, schoolmaster, and householder at Basle, was born in 1536. His father by unwearied activity had risen from the greatest poverty, and had up to an advanced age to struggle with anxieties for his maintenance, and with pecuniary embarrassments, in consequence of the constant extension of his business. This hard battle with life had exercised its usual influence on his mind; he had a restless spirit of enterprise, which sometimes hindered him from steadily pursuing a plan; he had no real self-confidence, was easily perplexed, irritable, and morose. His son Felix, the only child by his first marriage, had on the contrary inherited the joyous disposition of his single-minded mother; he was a jolly warm-hearted lad, rather vain, passionately fond of music and dancing, at the same time clever, open and ingenuous. He was still almost a

boy when his father sent him from Basle to the celebrated medical college of the university of Montpellier. Felix having acquired there, not only everything that medical science then offered, but all kinds of French refinements, returned to the simple burgher life of his native town: at the age of one-and-twenty he took his degree as doctor, and married happily a maiden about whom he had been teased when a child. He gained a great reputation, became Professor of the university, and a man of opulence and consideration, and died at an advanced age. He was of the greatest service to the city of Basle, by his self-sacrificing activity at the time of the plague, and also to the medical faculty of his university by his learning; and he was often consulted as a physician of renown by persons of princely rank both in Germany and France. He laid out a botanic garden at Basle, and possessed a cabinet of physical science worthy of being shown for money. Like his father, he wrote an account of part of his life: the following fragment is taken from a printed edition of the manuscript, entitled 'Thomas and Felix Platter, two Autobiographies, by Dr. D. A. Fechter, Basle, 1840.'

The narrative begins with that day on which the young Felix returns with all the self-confidence of a scholar to his native town.

"I was welcomed home by all my neighbours, and there was great rejoicing; the servant-maid of the midwife, Dorly Becherer, as I learnt afterwards, gained the *botenbrot** from my intended, by running to her father's house and screaming out the news, which she did so loud as quite to frighten her. Supper was prepared, and some of my companions who had heard of my arrival, and had forthwith come to visit me, stayed for it. After supper we escorted them to the Crown inn,

* The reward to the first bearer of good news. It was the universal custom in Germany, in the middle ages, to demand and give the "botenbrot."

and going down the Freienstrasse, my intended saw me passing by in my Spanish cap, and she fled. The innkeeper, who had himself been wooing her, bantered me, so that I perceived the affair was pretty well known: after that I returned home.

"The following morning, Hummel came to me to take me about the town. We first passed the Minster close, there Herr Ludwig von Rischach spied me out, and was wondering who I was, because I wore a velvet barret cap and arms: I made myself known to him; then I saluted Dr. Sulzer, pastor of the Minster; afterwards, Dr. Hans Huber, who welcomed me kindly and offered me his services; I made him a present of Clemens Marot, which had been beautifully bound at Paris.

"After that we went down Martin's Alley, and when we arrived at the bottom of it, opposite the school, my intended, who was standing by the bench saw me, though I did not see her; she ran into the school and home again; and after that she no longer went to the shops of the butchers, because they began to tease her. After dinner my father took me to his property at Gundeldingen; he talked to me on the road, and exhorted me not to speak too fast, as the French are apt to do, and gave me an account of his household. I began immediately to prepare my cypress lute, and to string the large harp which my father had formerly played; and I put my books and manuscripts in order; thus I spent the whole week.

"Meanwhile my father arranged matters that I might talk with my intended, and she with me; he therefore invited Master Franz and his daughter to come out to Gundeldingen the following Sunday afternoon; it was the sixteenth of May, a merry spring day. I went out there after dinner with Thiebold Schönauer; we had sent on our lutes, and when we entered the yard at Gundeldingen we saw two maidens

standing there; one was the cousin of the landlady, and engaged to Daniel the son of Master Franz, the other was his daughter Magdalen, my intended, whom I greeted cordially, as she did me, not without changing colour. Thus we got into converse; her brother Daniel joined us; we walked about the property, talking of divers things; my intended was modest, bashful, and quiet. At three o'clock we returned to the house, and went up stairs; I and Thiebold played the lute, and I danced the gaillarde, as was my custom. Meanwhile, Master Franz, her father, arrived and welcomed me; we sat down to table and had an evening drink as at supper, till it was late, and time for us to return to town. On the road homewards, her father and mine went in advance, and I and Daniel followed with the ladies in friendly talk, when Dorothy, who was somewhat bold of speech, burst forth, saying, 'When two are fond of each other they should make no delay, for one knows not how quick a misfortune may come between them.' Near the ramparts we separated, Master Franz and his party went home through the Stein gate, and my father and his through the Eschemer gate. We all went to bed full of curious thoughts about myself.

"My father-in-law and my father took counsel together, to make our engagement sure. I began to love her very much, and urged it on. I also was not disagreeable to her, which I had partly found out from herself, when the wife of the butcher, Burlacher, my mother's cousin, had invited us to her meadow before the Spalen gate to eat cherries, where we had been able to speak openly. It was determined that Dr. Hans Huber should make the proposal for me. When my father asked it of him, he readily assented, appointed Master Franz in the forenoon to meet him at the Minster, made the proposal, and gained his consent for a family marriage counsel. In the evening, when Dr. Hans came to me, he announced it to me with exultation, as was his wont, and

congratulated me; but informed me that my father-in-law wished the affair to be kept quiet till my doctorate was over, when matters might proceed. I was well satisfied therewith, as my future father-in-law was at last inclined to consent. Formerly, he had always held back because he feared that my father was greatly in debt, and because he had boarders; for, as he said, he did not wish his daughter to be thrown into debts and disquietudes. But when he heard from my father that his debts were small in comparison with his property in land and houses, and that he himself intended to do away with the boarders, he was satisfied; and so much the more as Herr Caspar Krug, afterwards burgomaster, who had seen me, advised him, and because his son Ludwig told him he ought to thank God, as he had good hopes that I should become a renowned doctor, for I had shown my skill in curing his wife (who was weak after giving birth to two children) by giving her marchpane, which I had ordered when it was not yet the custom to do so. So my father-in-law was at last well pleased, and did not object to my going to his house to speak with his daughter. Yet I did this mostly in his absence, and secretly. I entered by the back door in the alley, and talked to her there in the lower part of the house, with due propriety and honour. Her father did not object, but appeared not to notice it; he also deferred matters as long as he could, for he did not like to give away his daughter, who, as he boasted, kept house so well for him.

"About this time, Thomas Guerin was engaged to Jungfrau Elizabeth of the Falcon. He frequently came to me with Pempelfort, and begged of me to arrange a musical serenade, to do homage to his love at the Falcon. I promised him this, but under the condition that a serenade should also be given at any place that I chose. So we equipped ourselves, and went, late after supper, in front of the house of my intended. We had two lutes, I and Thiebold

Schönaur played together, afterwards I took the harp, and Pempelfort the viola. The goldsmith Hogenbach whistled an accompaniment, and it was altogether quite fine music; no one took any notice of us, for my future father-in-law was at home. Then we went to the Falcon, and there, after we had paid our court, we were admitted, and had a splendid night-cup, with all kinds of sweetmeats; when we were returning home, the watchmen stopped us at the Green King, but they let us go after we had given them satisfactory answers. I often took a walk to the house of my intended, but as far as possible, secretly, and talked much whimsical nonsense, as lovers do, which she answered discreetly. I dressed myself also, according to custom, for then we wore only coloured clothes, and not black, except for mourning. Certain persons now began to watch me, and once when I left the house after supper, two men followed me, and would willingly have beaten me, but I escaped, so that nothing happened to me.

"Soon after I had become a doctor my father urged that the marriage should be concluded between me and the Jungfrau Magdalen; and therefore, towards the end of September, he spoke to her father, and as I had honourably and praiseworthily fulfilled everything, and the matter had not remained secret, he could not object to settling it—thereupon he gave a satisfactory answer, but kept always delaying the affair, for, as aforesaid, he was unwilling to part with his daughter. Meanwhile I was allowed to go to the house openly; but it surprised me that it did not displease him, as it was not yet a settled marriage, and, indeed, might never have taken place; our intercourse, however, was carried on with all due propriety and honour, and we held converse on divers discreet subjects, and had much joking and bantering, and often I helped her to make electuaries, and thus we passed the time. We had once particularly good fun; when on the eve of St. Simon and St. Jude they rang the bells

for the fair, I wished to get a fairing from her. As her father was absent, I went secretly to the back door of her house which was constantly open, and seeing no one, as all were in the chamber below, I slipped up the stairs to the garret, and looked out of the skylight in order to hear when the bells rang in the fair at twelve. I waited for three hours, both cold and weary; as soon as the bells began to sound, I slipped down and opened the door of the room crying out, 'Give me a fairing,' thinking thereby to surprise her. There was no one there, and the maid said, as she had been told to do, that she was gone out; but she had hidden herself under the staircase, and was waiting; soon after she hastened into the room with the usual exclamation, and gained from me the fairing. This I gave her handsomely, and she gave me one also. I wished to present her with the little chain that I had brought with me from Paris, but she begged me to keep it, as it might give occasion for gossip, and she might have it at some other time; but she took the little beautifully bound Testament which I had also offered her; thus we had our pastime for a long period, as is usual with young people.

"After the fair at Basle, my father-in-law, as he could no longer delay, began to prepare for the betrothal, and it was fixed for the week after St. Martin's day. We came about four o'clock to his house; there were assembled on his side Herr Caspar Krug, afterwards burgomaster, Martin Fickler, and Master Gregorius Schölin, and Batt Hug, his friends, and his son Franz Jeckelmann; there were on our side Dr. Hans Huber, Matthias Bornhart, and Henricus Petri. They negotiated about the dowry, and my future father-in-law announced that his daughter would bring with her more than three hundred pounds' worth of property; of this there would be one hundred florins of ready money, and the rest in clothes and linen. When they asked my father what he would give, he replied he could not say; he had no child but me, and all

would be mine. But when they told him that he must name something, as there might be changes (as did, indeed, afterwards happen),* he answered that he had not reflected upon this, so he would name four hundred gulden; but that as he could not give it me we should board with him instead, for he had no money to give me, on the contrary he was much in debt. Thereupon arose some disputing; my father-in-law exclaimed that he would not expose his daughter to the discomfort of the boarders, and would rather have us in his house, and censured my father for being in debt, so that my father was much grieved, and if the honourable company present had not interfered, the matter would have remained unsettled. This was the first contretemps that happened to me, and was a great grief both to me and to my intended, who had heard all in the kitchen, and was in great trouble. However, the affair was smoothed, as my father said he would gladly give up the boarders, though it could not be done immediately. From that time my father was somewhat out of sorts, which embittered the whole pleasure of my nuptials. We were betrothed, and I presented my bride with the gold chain I had brought from Paris; and my father-in-law gave the banquet, with good entertainment and speeches, but there was no music, which I should have liked best.

"Great preparations were made for the marriage, which was to take place on the following Monday, for my father considering that he had an only son, wished, for the satisfaction of my father-in-law, to invite the whole of his friends and other well-wishers; so invitations were sent out on the Saturday to the relations and neighbours, and our good friends the master and councillor of the Guild of the Bear, to some of the high school, nobles, councillors, scholars, and also artisans with their wives and children.

* Thomas Platter, the father, married again later, and had six children by his second wife.

"On the following Sunday, the 21st of October, our banns were published as is customary; the tables, and everything appertaining to the wedding were arranged in both my fathers' houses; many helped, and Master Batt Oesy, the landlord of the Angel, was cook. In the evening I went to my father-in-law's house, watched them making the nosegays, and remained with them till after supper. When I returned home I found Herr Schreiber Rust, an old acquaintance of my father's, who had come out of friendship from Burtolf to the wedding, and had brought with him a beautiful Emmenthaler cheese. He was sitting at table with my father, who was greatly disquieted, as to how he could feed and treat so large a number of people as had been invited; he persuaded himself that it would be impossible, and that he would disgrace himself, and he was quite cross. Especially, when I came home, he began to scold me very roughly for sitting always with my bride, and letting him have all the trouble, instead of helping him; and he was so angry with me that Herr Rust had enough to do to pacify and comfort him. This third cross and embittering of the happiness of my wedding was very disquieting to me, as I was not accustomed to be thus scolded, and had hitherto usually been praised and well treated; I saw clearly how it would henceforth be when there were two of us living at my father's cost, so that everything would be rendered unpleasant to me. I went to bed full of sorrow, and thought like a fool that I would like to withdraw from my present position, if the door were only open to me.

"On the morning of the 22nd of October, St. Cecilia's day, I was still dispirited, as I had slept little. I put on my bridegroom's shirt which had been sent to me, with a gold embroidered collar and many golden spangles on the short breast piece, as was the custom then, and over that a red brocaded satin waistcoat and flesh-coloured breeches. Thus I came down and found my father no longer so unjust, for

when he had begun to complain again, although there was a superfluity of everything, he got a good chiding from Dorothea Schenkin, who was also helping, and was a rough-spoken woman. When the marriage guests were assembled, we went in procession to my father-in-law's house, and with us Dr. Oswald Berus, who, in spite of his great age, was dressed in an open satin waistcoat and a camlet coat, the same as mine, and a velvet barret cap, like that which was placed on my head, when in front of my bride's house, and this said cap was bordered with pearls and flowers.

"We went about nine o'clock to the Minster, and then the bride arrived in a flesh-coloured cloak, led by Herr Heinrich Petri. After the sermon they married us; I gave her a twisted ring worth eight dollars; then we proceeded to the Jagdhof, where they gave us to drink. I led my bride in, and they regaled her splendidly in the upper room.

"There were fifteen tables spread, which were well filled by more than one hundred and fifty persons, not counting those who waited upon them, and a number of them remained to supper. The entertainment proceeded after this fashion: there were four courses in the following order, a hash of mutton, soup, meat, fowls, boiled pike, a roast, pigeons, capons, geese, rice porridge, salted liver, cheese, and fruit. There were divers kinds of wines, amongst others Rangenwein, which was much to the taste of the guests. The music consisted of Christelin the trumpeter, with his viola; the singers were the scholars, who sang among other things the song of the spoon; after the dinner, which did not last as long as is now customary, Herr Jacob Meyer, the Councillor of the Bear, broke up the party. Dr. Myconius led the bride to the house of Dr. Oswald Berus, where there was dancing in the hall; there were many persons, and some of them people of consequence. Master Laurens played the lute, Christelin accompanied him on his viola, which was then less used than

now. I wished to do the courteous by my bride, as I had been accustomed to do in France in dancing, but she being bashful gently admonished me, so I desisted. I danced however, at Myconius' suggestion, a gaillard alone.

"After that we returned to my father's house to supper. When it began to get late the guests took leave, and that there might not be too much noise and joking, I hid myself in my father's room, where my bride also had been secretly concealed, whose father wept so at parting with her, that I thought they would be quite ill from crying. I led her into my father's little room, and some of the women of her acquaintance came to comfort her, to whom I gave some claret to drink, which I had kept in a small cask behind the stove, and had made very good. When they departed, my mother who was always cheerful, came and said that the young students were seeking me, therefore we had better conceal ourselves and go to bed; so she led us secretly by the back stairs up to my room, where we sat for some time, and as it was very cold we were half frozen, so we commended ourselves to God and went to bed; and none of the students knew what had become of us. After a time we heard my mother come up stairs above our room; there she sat and sang with as sweet a voice as a young maiden, though she had reached a great age; whereat my bride laughed heartily.

"On the Tuesday morning her bridesmaid Kathleen brought her the rest of her clothes; we admitted her, and as she was a pleasant maiden, we had much fun with her. After that the marriage guests collected again at dinner, which took place at eleven o'clock, for then we had not turned time topsy-turvy, as is the bad custom now. There were as many tables laid as on the first day, and the entertainment was as ample; and there was in addition the bridal porridge, which is now replaced by mulled wine. After dinner they danced till night, and at supper there were still many guests,

especially the maidens, who all took leave and went home in good time. There were many rich presents given at the marriage; but of these I got only a small goblet and two ducats, the rest my father took to defray the costs as far as they would, and later, as soon as I earned something, I had to pay him for my clothes. My father took also the hundred gulden that my wife had brought with her, and paid it off likewise. My father-in-law made me no present, because, as he afterwards told me, he had paid five gulden for me at the doctor's capping feast, and therewith I ought to be content. The household gear that my wife brought with her was not very good; an old pan in which they had made her porridge, and a large wooden bowl in which her mother's dinner had been brought to her during her confinements, and other bad utensils, which were placed behind a screen in our room. After that, our household arrangements were to be fixed and regulated by my wife's advice, which required great consideration. My father still continued to have boarders and all kinds of disquiet in the house, so that we young married people were much harassed; we had rather have kept house by ourselves, but we could not manage it; we were obliged for nearly three years to board with my father, and I had to make shift with my room, and to see the sick in the lower hall, which was cold in winter. There was frequent offence taken because I could not help towards the kitchen expenditure, for I had enough to do to provide ourselves with clothes, and frequently had to pay what I had just earned to the shops where I was still in debt for them; which was thrown in my teeth, if I did not do it. Thus there were at times quarrels, as often happens when old and young dwell together. Therefore my wife would have been glad if we could have dwelt by ourselves, and she would willingly have managed with very little; if my father would have given the promised dowry and the hundred gulden which she had brought to me, we

could have subsisted upon that; but my father could not do this, as he had no ready money; and I did not wish to anger, but rather conciliate him, and so I spoke him fair, saying, we would have patience till I got into better practice. All this grieved me because I loved her much, and would gladly have maintained her as was meet for a doctor's wife; therefore for a long time I treated her with less familiarity and more ceremony; my father perceived this with displeasure, and thought it ought not to be. I had not much to do before the new year.

"There were many doctors at Basle when I came there, both graduates and quacks, in the year 1557. Therefore I had to be very skilful to support myself, and God has abundantly blessed me therein. From day to day I got more practice both among the inhabitants of the town, and also among the strangers, some of whom came to me and dwelt a long time here, using my remedies, whilst others went away immediately, having obtained my advice and prescription. Strangers also sent for me to their houses and castles, whither I hastened, not staying long, but returning home quickly, that I might attend to those at home as well as in distant parts."

CHAPTER X.

OF A PATRICIAN HOUSE.
(1526—1598.)

Though the narrative of Sastrow gives us a view of the hard struggle of a rising family, and that of Felix Platter shows to what shifts even a vigorous life may be reduced, yet one must not forget that the intellectual life of Germany was rich and varied in its aims and tendencies. Worldly-minded education, opulence, and the pleasures of social enjoyment were concentrated in the patrician families of the great Imperial cities, who, however, often manifested bad taste in their refinement; but at the same time arts and commerce called forth all their energies, and whatever sense of beauty then existed, was to be found especially in these circles. In the great cities of Switzerland, the Low Countries, and the seaports of the German Hanse Towns, there was a peculiar development of the patrician order; but it was the patrician families of the great commercial cities of South Germany, and amongst these more especially those of Nuremberg, Augsburg, Ulm, Frankfort on the Maine, and Cologne, that exercised the greatest influence on the luxury, industry, and learning of Germany. Members of the old families had once governed the cities with aristocratic rule; they were still the most influential citizens, accustomed to conduct great affairs, and to represent the highest interests; they were generally merchants or large landed proprietors. Most of

the Church benefices were possessed by their families; they were the first who used to send their sons into Italy, the land of their mercantile friends, to study law, thus making preparation in Germany for the rising Humanitarian learning. Many of them were heads of mercantile firms, councillors and confidants of German princes; they were united together by family alliances, and not less by community of commercial interests and had extended themselves everywhere; they chiefly determined the German policy of the Imperial cities, and they would have exercised a decisive influence on the newly formed German life, had they been less conservative in their tendencies, and had they not by their self-interest become sometimes un-German.

They represented the moneyed power of Germany; the Emperor and princes obtained loans from them, and they were the medium of the greater part of the money and exchange transactions, when these were not in the hands of the Jews. The great firms of Fugger and Welser and their partners formed a great trading company, which carried on traffic not only with Italy and the Levant, but also beyond Antwerp and the Atlantic Ocean. Through them, German trade monopolized that of the East and West Indies; they bought a whole year's harvest from the King of Portugal, they united themselves with Spanish houses in unlimited speculations, undertook journeys to Calcutta, and settled on their own account the prices of the sugar and spices of the East, which were then of greater importance in the German cookery than now.

This command over capital was regarded with great dislike by both princes and people. Through these trading companies much ready money passed out of the country, and all objects of luxury rose in price; complaints were general, for the diminution in the worth of money, occasioned by the

introduction of the American gold, was mistaken for the raising of prices by the merchants. Not only Hutten, who was deeply imbued with the prejudices of his own class, but even the Imperial Diet was jealous of the power of these great moneyed companies; among the people also, the antipathy to them was general, and the Reformers shared the opinions of their cotemporaries as to the detriment of such domination over capital.

Yet even then, it may be observed that these great merchant princes had not all the same tendencies. The Welsers of Augsburg, for example, in 1512, took an active interest at Rome on behalf of Reuchlin, and that great scholar owed his deliverance from the hands of the Dominicans, more perhaps to their secret influence than to the refined rhetoric of his enthusiastic admirers in Germany. On the other hand, the Fuggers were considered by the people as reckless moneyed men and Romanists; as enemies of Luther and friends of Eck, who was suspected of being in their pay; for they had charge of the money affairs of the Elector Albrecht of Mayence, and of the Romish curie, and one of the Fugger's clerks accompanied the indulgence chest of Tetzel, and controlled the incoming receipts, on which the banking-house of the Archbishop of Mayence had made advances. The Emperor, Charles V., received the most solid support from these powerful firms, as their interests were generally concurrent with his; with the people, however, "*Fuggerei*" became the common term for usury. We learn the family tendency for outward splendour and intercourse with the great, from the description which Hans von Schweinichen gives of their opulence in the year 1575.

When the dissolute Duke Heinrich von Liegnitz with his majordomo was at Augsburg, the splendour of this house appeared to the Silesian noblemen as quite fabulous. Schweinichen, who was more accurate in specifying the sums of

money and prices than was necessary considering the endless debts of his master, gives the following narrative.*

"Herr Max Fugger once invited his Princely Highness to dinner. Such a banquet have I never beheld, the Roman Emperor himself could not have been entertained better: there was superabundant splendour; the repast was spread in a hall where more gold than colour was to be seen; the floor was of marble, and as smooth as if one was walking on ice; there was a sideboard placed along the whole length of the hall, which was set out with drinking-vessels and notably beautiful Venetian glasses; there must have been, as one says, the value of more than a ton of gold. I waited on his Princely Highness when the drinking began. Now Herr Fugger gave to his Princely Highness for a drinking-cup, an artistically formed ship of the most beautiful Venetian glass; when I took it from the sideboard and was going across the hall, having on my new shoes, I slipped up, and fell upon my back in the middle of the hall; the wine poured about my neck, the new red brocade dress which I had on was quite spoilt, and the beautiful ship was broken into a thousand pieces. Though this created great laughter amongst all, yet I was told that Herr Fugger said privately he would rather have lost a hundred gulden than that ship; it happened, however, without any fault on my part, for I had neither eaten nor drunk; but when later I became intoxicated I stood firmer, and did not fall a single time even in the dance. Meanwhile the lords and all others were very merry. Herr Fugger took his Princely Highness a walk through the house, a prodigious great house, so great that the Roman Emperor at the Imperial Diet found room in it for himself and his whole court. Herr

* 'Biography of Hans von Schweinichen,' v., Büsching, 1 S. 157. The host is the same Marcus Fugger who wrote the best work on the training of horses in the sixteenth century. He himself had a large stud, first in Hungary, and then at the foot of the Allganer Alps.

Fugger showed his Princely Highness, in a turret, a treasure of chains, jewels, and precious stones, and of curious coins and pieces of gold the size of a head, and he himself said that they were worth more than a million of gold. Afterwards he opened a chest that was full of nothing but ducats and crowns up to the brim; these he estimated at two hundred thousand gulden, which had been remitted to him in exchange by the King of Spain. Then he led his Princely Highness up to the turret, which was paved half way down from the top with good thalers; he said there were about seventeen thousand. He showed his Princely Highness great honour, but also his own power and possessions: it is said that Herr Fugger had enough to buy an empire. He gave me, on account of my fall, a beautiful new groschen which weighed about nine grains. His Princely Highness expected also a good present, but got nothing but a good drinking bout. At that time Fugger bestowed the hand of his daughter on a count, and gave two hundred thousand thalers, besides jewels, as her dowry.

"As his Princely Highness had very little ready money he sent me to Herr Fugger to borrow four thousand thalers; but he decidedly declined doing this, excusing himself quite politely; however the following day he sent his steward to me to be introduced to my lord, through whom he presented to his Princely Highness two hundred crowns, a beautiful goblet worth eighty dollars, and besides that a splendid horse with black velvet housings."

Together with this taste for display we find in other patrician families at the beginning of this century far higher aims in life. The firms of Pentinger at Augsburg, and Perkheimer at Nuremberg were the focus of the noblest interests of the nation; the heads of these houses were men of princely opulence, landed proprietors and merchant princes, statesmen and warriors, and at the same time men of learning and

research. It was for families like these that Albert Dürer painted his best pictures; to them the travelling Humanitarians resorted; every elegant verse, every manly sentiment or word of genius, were there first heartily appreciated. As councillors and patrons in worldly concerns, as liberal proprietors of valuable libraries and of first-rate cabinets of antiquities, as hospitable masters of rich households, they knew how to do honour to all who brought to their houses intellect, knowledge, and refinement.*

In these families, the women also frequently received an education which went further than the knowledge of cooking, spinning, and the prayer-book; the daughters of these households gained what was seldom to be found in the castles of the princes or in the mansions of the landed nobility,—a heartfelt interest in the sciences and arts with which the friends of the family were occupied. There is a peculiar charm for us in the contemplation of the first female characters who were ennobled by the dawn of a new civilization. Constance Peutinger, who twined the laurel wreaths for Hutten; Caritas Perkheimer, the suffering abbess of Clarenklosters at Nuremberg, and later Philippine Welser, the wife of the Emperor's son, all belonged to the class of German patricians; they were sensitive natures often oppressed and wounded in this rough and thorny period.

It was especially when a woman took part in the literary struggle that she was destined to suffer, this however rarely happened; the best known instances are those of Caritas Pirkheimer and Argula von Grumbach, born at Stauffen; both experienced how bitter it is for women to take part in the disputes of men. The Roman Catholic Caritas wrote a letter full of reverence to Emser, and had to go through the trial of seeing her letter printed by the Lutheran party with con-

* Compare with this the beautiful characteristic of Wilibald Pirkheimer in D Strauss Hutten, 1.

temptuous marginal notes. The Lutheran Argula, the friend of Spalatin, sent an admonitory letter to the rector of the university at Ingoldstadt, when it had compelled Arsatius Seehofer by imprisonment and a threat of the stake, to recant seventeen heresies, which he had propounded to the students from the writings of Melancthon. Argula bravely took the master's part, whom she called a child of eighteen years old, and offered to go to Ingoldstadt herself to defend the good cause against the university. She was in consequence of this, maliciously assailed in verse, against which she valiantly defended herself in counter-rhymes. The last years of Caritas and her mild brother were embittered by the rude attacks of the Protestant rabble and their teachers. Argula was banished from the Bavarian court, and her husband was dismissed in disgrace from his court appointment.

The Glauburgs were one of the most distinguished patrician families of Frankfort-on-the-Maine; Hutten had been very intimate with some members of this family, and had at one time indulged in the charming dream of establishing himself at Frankfort and marrying one of them. Even the ardent spirit of Hutten was powerfully attracted by their splendid opulence and highly refined life. He eagerly disclaimed the suspicion that he intended to take away his bride to the rocky home of his family. He wooed the maiden with more consideration than was his wont, and Arnold of Glauburg was his confidant. But it was a short dream; his destiny soon tore him away. The following letters from two ladies will introduce us into this patrician family; they are printed in the Frankfort archives of J. C. von Fichard, 1811—1815. The first is the letter of a mother to her son, in which she recommends to him a maiden for his wife, in order to withdraw him from the revolutionaries of Wittenberg and the neighbourhood of Luther; a letter which is characteristic of the position of women in a family, and written by one pos-

sessed of energy and a practical understanding, who was accustomed to rule, and not without a disposition to intrigue; her son was the nephew of that Arnold of Glauburg, the son of Johann, to whom Hutten sent with hearty greeting his dialogue *Febris*.

1526.

From Margaret Horng at Frankfort, to her son John von Glauburg at Wittenberg.*

"Having given you first, dear Johann, my friendly greeting, know that we are all well in health, praise and thanks be to God, and hope to hear the same of you. Dear Johann, after I had last written to you, the wife of Johann Knoblauch died, to whom God be merciful. She was my good friend, and her death has caused me as great grief as the decease of my two blessed husbands, which was however a great calamity to me; but what God wills we must bear with patience. She and I came here the same year, and lived so friendly together that neither ever angered the other with a word. On her death-bed she commended to me her two daughters as if I were her sister, and begged that I should take care of their dowry, if I should live till they married. One of them is now marriageable, an elegant, well-formed maiden; she is in height like your step-sister Anna, which is also her name, and she is a clever housekeeper, so that he who has her for a portion will not be ruined by her; I foresee that her father will soon establish her, for there are three who woo her, two of them are noblemen, and the third is Johann Wolf Rohrbach, the son of Frau Ursula at the green gate, who is now grown up and has been with his mother since Easter. Although he is only nineteen years old, yet it is the wish of his mother and his

* Margaret Horng of Ernstkirchen was twice married, first to Dr. Johann von Glauburg at Lichtenstein, then to Weicker Frosch, both of Frankfort families.

friends to establish him whilst she is still alive. For now no one knows what to do with their sons, that they may learn and study what is for their soul's salvation, and not be led astray: for when they have long studied, and spent much money, it is of little advantage to many of them, and perhaps it would have been more profitable to them, to have retained the innate honesty and simplicity which they have from God, than that they should study, and not rightly understand the Scripture, and that then the devil should lead them astray through pride, and others with them because they are learned and know how to talk well. Such men lead the people into great error. I would gladly write much to you thereupon, but having promised in my last letter that I would not write to you again thereof, I will not do so whilst you are at Wittenberg; for you imagine that you are in safe keeping in Wittenberg. God grant it may be true, and that you will find it so. Further, dear Johann, know wherefore I now write to you thus—— an honourable person has just told me that the wife of Johann Knoblauch had desired her husband, if you and your belongings should ask his daughter in marriage, and the daughter were willing, that he should give her to you rather than to any other. To this I answered, that I did not know your inclinations, but would write and inform you of this, and whatever answer I got from you I would communicate to this person. Therefore, dear son, I make known to you that the maiden pleases me well in all her ways, better than any other with whom I am acquainted; and the mother has always been an honourable steadfast woman. Therefore, I am well pleased that she is not of a fickle nature, for whoever has not an apt and steadfast wife, be she ever so polished and rich, will become a poor miserable man. Therefore, dear Johann, follow my advice, for I give you faithful counsel. It is true there are eleven children to provide for, some of whom are still little, but possibly may become fewer in number, and

there is a good fortune, the greater part of it in landed property. Therefore bethink you, dear son, I do not wish to constrain you to change your condition, but it would be the greatest pleasure to me were you to enter this family, for looking into the future, I can see no place that would altogether suit you so well as this one. Dear Johann, if this idea should please you, and you should wish to see her and that she should see you beforehand, come here in the first week of Lent with any travelling companions that you like, to give you security on the road; but keep your purpose to yourself, saying nothing of it to your companions till a day or two before your departure, then tell Justinian that you are going home. But do not tell him why you wish to go home, but make it appear as if it were on account of your property which you wish to regulate, as I had written to you so strongly in my last three letters about it, declining to administer it any longer, as is indeed my intention, if you will in nowise take my advice. There is good reason why you should prevent his saying a word, in order that it should remain secret. Dear Johann, I beg of you to bethink yourself of how the times are, and that it is not fitting for you to remain longer unsettled. Ah! may my brother-in-law Herr Hammann find a wife also for Justinian now; it would do him no harm, as he leads a life of pleasure; and let it not be with him as it was with his deceased cousin Blasius, who had so accustomed himself to a profligate life that no one could persuade him to marry till he became old and had lost his health; he had no child, and now his wife is betrothed again to a nobleman, one Schenk of Schweinsburg. They say she will soon celebrate her nuptials: God grant her happiness."

Thus far the letter: the wish of the prudent mother was fulfilled; her son returned, as she had so cautiously charged him to do, to Frankfort; he married the maiden of her

choice, and they lived together forty years in happy matrimony.

Though we can obtain no other particulars of him and Anna Knoblauch, yet we find accounts of members of the same family, towards the end of the century, which characterize in a charming way the position of a bride with her betrothed. A grandson of the above mentioned, the rich patrician Adolf von Glauburg of Frankfort, made acquaintance, when on a visit at Nuremberg, with the beautiful Ursula Freher, daughter of the city Syndic of Nuremberg, and sister of the renowned scholar and statesman, Marquard Freher of Heidelberg. The charms and agreeableness of the lady were celebrated throughout Swabia. The following letters were written by her to him, from Nuremberg to Frankfort during the time of betrothal.

1598.

I.

"To the noble and honourable Johann Adolf von Glauburg, to the hands of my dearly beloved *Junker*.

"Most noble, honourable, amiable, and dearly beloved *Junker*, I have received with heartfelt joy your letter, together with the chain, and rejoice to hear you are in health, but learn with regret that your dear sister and son are not well; may God Almighty restore them according to his holy will. Amen. As regards us, we are, thank God, tolerably well, may He thus long preserve us all. Dearly beloved *Junker*, my father would gladly have written to you, but your letter arrived too late, and the messenger waiting at the gate is in haste, so that he cannot do it now, but will take the first opportunity.

"Dearly beloved *Junker*, with respect to the chain I have no directions to give you; as your wish is, so is my

content, what pleases you pleases me also. The chain which I have here I will carefully preserve, and when God brings you to us I will take the opportunity of returning it to you; it is much too splendid for me. As to the picture, it is ready all but the dress, at which the painter is still working, and thinks it will be quite finished in about ten days. I have great fear that when the picture comes to you, it will be said the *Junker* need not have gone so far, he might have found the like of her at Frankfort.

"As concerns the bracelets, I have not yet got them; there is yet plenty of time, but I will send after them.

"Dearly beloved *Junker*, I have nothing more to write to you now, I beg of you kindly to excuse this miserable letter, which has been written in haste; another time I will give you something better.

"No more now than kind greetings to you and your dear ones, from me and my honoured mother, and we commend you to the care and protection of God Almighty. Given the 12th September.

"Your loving and always faithful

"URSULA FREHERIN."

II.

"Most noble, honourable, dearly beloved, and much trusted *Junker*, may my truth and love, together with my greetings and good wishes, be to you beyond all other love and possessions. I received your letter with pleasure, and learned from it with heartfelt joy of your well-being. It is even so with us, for which we thank the gracious God; may He continue his grace to you and all of us. Amen.

"As concerning the marriage, my honoured father and mother have deliberated thereon, and have agreed that, please God, it shall take place on the 13th of November, as the *Junker* will find more amply detailed in my honoured father's letter.

"Dearly beloved *Junker*, I understand thus much from your letter, that you would gladly come here once again before the marriage. If that were possible, it would certainly be a great joy to me, and would give hearty pleasure to all mine without exception. I will not therefore this time entreat of you, but will have all hope and confidence that it may come to pass, and that the *Junker* will not fail to pay a visit to me the poor forlorn one, to which I look with great longing. Dearly beloved *Junker*, know that the packet has not yet arrived. We have already sent after it several times, and the answer has been, it was expected every hour; as soon as it comes, your desire shall be attended to; I believe it will answer well. The wife of Dr. Reiner has already written to my honoured mother concerning it, and given it clearly to be understood that she is not to be forgotten in the bridal presents;* however she need not have been in anxiety about it, as she had already been thought of.

"Dearly beloved *Junker*, with respect to the shirts and collars, you must know that we are working zealously thereat, and as many as can be got ready shall be distributed.

"I have received the bracelets; accept, my dearly beloved *Junker*, my warmest thanks. They are much too pretty for my brown hands, but they please me well.

"As regards dress, undoubtedly my honoured father would like to do for one daughter the same as for the other, but as that cannot be on this occasion, he has consented to do something more. I have three taffety dresses; the flesh colour, one gold colour, and one black. We have the tailor still in the house, who is making a violet-coloured damask, and another dress in which I am to go to church, which is to be either of red satin or of black damask. Now I beg you will let me know which you would prefer.

* This refers to the presents of the bridegroom to the female relation of the bride.

"Dearly beloved *Junker*, I cannot venture to make further demands on my father; for this reason, that none of my sisters have had so much done for them, or such splendid things. But as you have so strongly admonished me, I will be so unreasonable as to ask somewhat of the *Junker*, first begging of you kindly not to take it amiss, as I do it at your own desire; and this is my petition, dearly beloved *Junker:* I wish you to send me a dress of whatever kind you like, whether flesh coloured or silver, that I may have greater change of dress.

"Dearly beloved and well-trusted *Junker*, I have another great request to make to you. You know that I have two sisters who love me, and whom I equally love well; I should like to give them some little thing as a present in your name, if it seems good to you. I have written this to you because you have desired me to speak out my wishes, therefore, I beg you, *Junker*, not to take it amiss of me. I do not write it with the idea that it must be, but that it may be done or left undone by the *Junker* at his pleasure.

"I send you, according to your desire, the measure of my beautiful stature; we have added nothing to it, but such as the maiden is, so is the measure. I hope that, God willing, they may soon see me tall and beautiful as I am.

"We have partaken with pleasure of the grapes you sent us, and kindly thank you for the same. If we get anything rare we will impart it to you.

"I am delighted that my picture pleases your youngest daughter so well, and that she has shown it so much honour; let her boldly kiss it; God grant that I may see her, and I will return it to her with interest.*

"The shoes which I must have for the pulling off,† I will

* The bridegroom was a widower.

† After the marriage feast the shoes are taken from the feet of the bride and given to the best-man.

have made as soon as possible of the best kind, as good as they can be made here, although here they are not in fashion. Dearly beloved *Junker*, I have one more petition to make in conclusion, namely, that you will make the best of my plain, simple, bad letter, for I intend it in all sincerity, and write from my open heart; and kindly favour me with an answer, which, at the same time, I would rather have by word of mouth, than in writing.

"No more from me but what is always pleasing and agreeable to you. Herewith I send to the Junker, together with his dearly beloved son and daughter, a hundred thousand greetings, and commend you and ourselves to God Almighty. Given the 10th October at Nuremberg.

"Yours true in ♡ as long as I live,

"URSULA FREHERIN."

III.

"Most noble, honourable, amiable, and dearly loved Junker, I send you my most kindly greeting, together with my love and truth. I received your letter with pleasure, and learned therefrom with heartfelt joy of the well-being of you and yours. As regards us, we have also to thank our dear and gracious God; may He continue his mercy to us all. Amen.

"I perceive from your letter that it is impossible for you to come to us before the marriage. This we are sorry to hear, and I am greatly disappointed. I quite thought you would come, and was heartily rejoiced thereat, and oft I ran to the window when I heard any sound of riding or driving. May our dear Lord God give us all health, and bring us together with joy.

"With respect to the wreath, I thank you kindly, dearly beloved Junker, that you have informed me about it. I am

quite persuaded that we shall give occasion for much rude gossip, from not knowing the customs amongst you, as they seem quite different to what they are here. I pray you to have the wreath made as it ought to be, and to send it to us as you propose in your letter. As to the other wreath, Frau Nützelin has instructed me how it ought to be, and I have ordered one with golden spangles, which shall be properly made. I am not satisfied about the bridal presents, as you have not written to me what I am to take for my sisters, and they will not say what they would like; I am fearful of taking too much, or too little, and yet wish to do exactly what is right; I hoped that you would let me know what, and how much they should have. As concerning mine, I hope I shall act so as to deserve them.

"Dearly beloved Junker, I have yet a great request to make to you concerning the shoes, if I may venture to do it, and you will receive it without displeasure. It is, however, a shame that I should trouble you with it, but it cannot be helped. I have had shoes made, and shown them to Frau Nützelin, who says they are good for nothing, being much too large; that they ought to be quite little, or they would laugh at me outright; and she has advised me to write to the Junker, and beg he will have them made down there, because being the fashion, they can make them better than here, where they are never worn; they could not at all understand me, even when I explained it to them fully, still they did not comprehend it; however I indeed have never seen one. I send you herewith, dearly beloved Junker, two ducats, and pray you to let your maid-servant see after it, it is my desire that you should not be troubled with it. They need not be very costly, there should be only the arms, or perhaps the name upon them, and they should not be large or long.

"My honoured mother begs that you will not take it amiss if she does not answer your letter now; she has so

much to do, she has no leisure, but another time she will send you an answer.

"Dearly beloved Junker, I have nothing further to write except that yesterday I was at the wedding, I felt much because you were not here, and also not coming, and Nützel brought me home in your place.

"I have nothing further to say, and no leisure, as I must go to the wedding party. There remains only to send you and yours a hundred thousand kindly greetings from my honoured mother, my brothers and sisters, and to commend you to the care and protection of God Almighty.

"In great haste.

"Your true and loving brunette, and as long as I live,

"Yours in ♡

"URSULA FREHERIN."

IV.

"Most noble, honourable, amiable, and dearly beloved Junker, may my kindly greeting and good wishes attend you.

"I have received your letter, and learned with heartfelt joy, of the well-being of you and yours; as regards us, we are, thanks and praise be to God, still well. May God Almighty so keep us all for ever, according to his will and pleasure. Amen.

"Concerning your letter, wherein you write that you wish to try my love and obedience, I did not long deliberate, because the time is now short, and I have taken a good deal out of the purse for myself and sisters, yet not with the intention that it should always go on so; and thus, dearly beloved Junker, your commands and my obedience are fully carried out, and I and my sisters do greatly and kindly thank you, and we hope, God willing, to thank you soon by word

of mouth. I have also seen, after what you wrote, that the horses should be ready.

"I hope that I shall have executed your orders so that you may be brought safely through your dangerous journey, for it would assuredly be very painful to me, if on my account you were to be exposed to great danger.

"Dearly beloved Junker, we have heard with pleasure that you will come to us at the last inn, for in truth it will be necessary to instruct us as to all the arrangements.* May God Almighty give you health and happiness, and bring us together in joy. The last inn for sleeping will be Stockstadt; my honoured father will also write to you his instructions, and by them you will be guided.

"No more at present, than that you, dearly beloved Junker, your son and daughter, are heartily greeted by me and mine, and commended to the care and protection of God Almighty.

"In great haste.

"Your true and loving brunette, as long as I live

in ♡♡

"Ursula Frehebin."

* Of the ceremonial of fetching home the bride, and the festive entrance into the city of Frankfort. This fetching home took place with a splendour which made an epoch in the patrician circles of Frankfort. 1598.

CHAPTER XI.

GERMAN NOBILITY IN THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY.

In the beginning of the sixteenth century we find the names of the German nobles, Fronsperg, Hutten, and Sickingen, conspicuous in the three different ways in which the nobles then employed themselves,—the Army, the Church, and State, and the representation and maintenance of the rights and interests of the landed proprietors. But it appears strange that even up to the middle of the seventeenth century, men like these should have had so few of their own class following in their footsteps. From the time of Fronsperg to that of the Bohemian Junker Albrecht of Waldstein, and the wild cavalry leader Pappenheim, the whole of Germany produced no General of more than average skill from among the nobility. There were a few Landsknechte leaders of citizen extraction like Schärtlin, and some German princes, all however with more pretension than capacity, and it was principally to Spaniards and Italians that the family of the Emperor Charles V. and their opponents owed their most important victories. As to the intellectual life of Germany, there was still less of that amongst the nobility after the time of Hutten. How few noble names do we find in the long list of reformers, scholars, poets, architects, and artists! The first occur in the seventeenth century, when we find those of the members of the *Palmenordens*, the author of the 'Simplicissimus,' and of some noble rhymers belonging to the Silesian school of poetry

or to the Saxon court. One may well ask how it happened that an order so numerous, holding such an advantageous position with respect to the people, should have accomplished so little in this great field of action, which up to the time of the Hohenstaufen was especially in the possession of the nobility. And even with the most favourably disposed judgment, it would be difficult to ascribe to the landed nobility of the fifteenth, sixteenth, and the first half of the seventeenth centuries, any beneficial influences on any one of the great currents of life in Germany.

In fact the lower nobility—considered as an order—had been, since the time of the Hohenstaufen, a misfortune to Germany. It was after the beginning of the thirteenth century, when the difference betwixt the noblemen and freeholders had been established by the laws, by the interests and inclinations of the Emperor, and by the limited ideal, which was formed by the aristocratic body, that the nobility gradually decayed. In the cities, undoubtedly, the old dominion of the privileged freeman was broken in the last period of the middle ages; there, in spite of all hindrances, a quicker circulation of popular strength had established itself. The labourer could become a citizen, the experienced citizen could rise to be the ruler of his city, or of a confederation of cities, and be the leader of great interests. But the landed nobleman after the beginning of the thirteenth century sank gradually into a state of isolation; labour was a disgrace to him, his acres were cultivated by dependent vassals, and he naturally endeavoured as much as possible to separate himself from them. Ever heavier became the oppression by which he kept them down; ever higher rose the pretensions which he, as lord of the land and soil, raised against his own people.

But the oppression of the agriculturist was not the worst consequence of the privileged position of the noble. If he found it to his advantage to treat his beast of burden, the

peasant, with moderation, he was so much the more eager to make use of his landed rights in other directions. The high-roads, the river that ran by his castle, afforded him the opportunity of laying hold of the goods of strangers; he levied imposts upon goods and travellers; he obtruded his protecting escort upon them, and robbed such as considered this escort unnecessary; he built a bridge where there was no river, in order to raise a toll; he designedly kept the roads in bad condition, because he chose to consider that the goods of travelling merchants, though under the Emperor's protection, so long as they were in waggons or in vessels afloat; if the waggons were upset or vessels ran aground, belonged, according to manorial right, to the possessor of the land. Finally he became himself a robber, and with his comrades seized whatever he could lay hands on; he took the goods to his house, plundered the travellers, and kept them prisoners till they could free themselves by ransom. Nevertheless there were certain regulated observances accompanying these robberies, according to which the conscientious Junker distinguished between honourable and dishonourable plunder. But this moral code had very little to justify it. In the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries there were very few noblemen's houses which did not deserve the name of robber-holds, and still fewer out of which plundering attacks were not made.

But this life was most of all detrimental to the nobles themselves; their love of plunder, and their pugnacity, made them turn as much against their fellow-nobles as against the cities, and through the whole of the middle ages led to innumerable feuds. When the feud was notified by letter, some days previous to the beginning of hostilities, it was considered honourable. Any trifle was sufficient to occasion a feud: never-ending boundary disputes, encroachments on the chase, or the flogging of a servant, caused discord, even between old comrades and friendly neighbours. Then both

parties strengthened themselves by the assistance of relations and dependents; they enlisted troopers, and endeavoured to learn through the medium of spies how they could gain an advantage over the property, house, or person of their adversary. The opulence of the cities, and the rancour entertained by the nobles against the rising independence of the citizens, gave an agreeable excitement to their feuds with the latter. Whoever was unable to establish a profitable feud of his own, united himself as an assistant to another, and thus old comrades were often by the chapter of accidents opposed, and then, in the full consciousness of doing their duty, would beat and even stab each other.

This marauding life on the highways, in the woods and caverns, and with drunken companions, was neither favourable to their family life nor to their higher interests, nor was it even fitted to develop warlike capacity except among the subordinates. At the best, it only formed leaders of small bodies of mounted troopers for foraging expeditions and surprises. Sickingen himself, the most skilful specimen of a Junker of the sixteenth century, showed in his great and decisive feud, only very moderate talents as a general; and the capacities of Götz, in a military point of view, do not stand higher than those of an experienced serjeant of hussars. Thus wild, vicious, and detrimental to the community, was the conduct of even the quietest of the lower nobility. Their being a privileged order whose members considered themselves superior to citizen or peasant, who kept themselves apart from others, in marriage, business, law, manners, and ceremonials, made them for centuries weak, and their existence a misfortune to the people; but at the same time it saved them from the ruin consequent upon their disorderly life. On retrospect of the act itself, there is little difference to be seen between the robber who now waylays the wanderer on the lonely heath, and the country nobleman who about the year 1500 dragged

the Nuremberger merchant from his horse and kept him in a dark prison upon bread and water, whilst the noble's wife made coats and mantles out of the stolen cloth. But three hundred and fifty years ago, the noble robber practised his evil deeds with the feeling, that though his actions were perhaps contrary to the decrees of an Imperial Diet, yet they were looked upon by the whole nobility of his province, indeed by the highest sovereigns of the country, as pleasant or at the worst as daring tricks. Certainly if he was caught by the city whose citizens he had injured, he might possibly lose his life, as does now a murderer on the high-road, but the law of the city was not his law, and if he died, his death would probably be revenged by other active comrades. However unreasonable were the laws of honour according to which he lived, he felt that these same laws were honoured by thousands whom he esteemed as the best upon earth. Thus it was possible, that amidst the greatest immorality and perversity, many manly virtues might be exhibited by individuals; fidelity to their word, devotion to their friends, and kind-hearted friendliness even to those whom they had robbed and imprisoned.

It was at this period, under the new Emperor Maximilian, that the memorable attempt was begun, to give a new constitution to the shattered body of the Empire, and with it the possibility of a new life. More than a century elapsed and three generations passed away before the lesser nobility could accustom themselves to the restraint of the new laws; but the princes and cities, however much they might quarrel together, had the greatest interest in enforcing obedience to these laws. It is however worthy of note, that while losing a portion of their wild straightforward resoluteness, they adopted the faults more especially belonging to the new epoch. How the change gradually took place, we will demonstrate here by a few examples.

A happy accident has preserved to us three autobiographies of well-known German nobles of different periods of the 16th century, those of Berlichingen, of Schärtlin, and of Schweinichen; one of them, so long as the German language lasts, will be intimately associated with the name of the greatest German poet. These three men, who flourished in the beginning, the middle, and the end of this celebrated century, were widely different in character and destiny, but all three were landed proprietors, and each of them has recorded the events of his life, so as to give an instructive insight into the social condition of his circle. The best known is Götz von Berlichingen; his memoirs were first published in 1731. The halo, with which three hundred years after his death, Goethe's charming poem has invested him, will make it difficult for the reader of his biography to separate the ideal delineation of the poet from the figure of the historical Götz. And yet this is necessary. For however modestly and lovingly Goethe has portrayed his character, he appears quite different in history. When as an old man, in a time to which he was a stranger, he wrote his life, he loved to dwell on the knightly exploits of his wild youth. It was not his line to enter into political questions; if he found himself in a crisis he acted according to the advice of his patrons,—the great sovereigns, who employed his strong arm and steadfast will for their own objects. When the peasant army broke into his territories, he and his kinsmen were utterly at a loss what to do, and wrote for advice. The answer was suppressed by his mother-in-law and wife, and he was left to his own judgment, and had not sufficient adroitness to withdraw himself from the thronging insurgents. Had he been like many of his cotemporaries, such as Max Stumpf, he would have abandoned the peasants in spite of all his vows. But although not really faithful to them, true to the letter of his word, he adhered to them till the four weeks were passed, for which he had bound himself,

though he was not in fact their leader but their prisoner. After that he lived some years in close imprisonment, then for a long time in strict confinement at his castle. He was surrounded by a new generation, engaged in vehement strife, and he himself was grieving the while that he had acted in the peasant struggle as an honourable knight, and that still true to his word, he had even now to count the steps which he was allowed to take beyond the gates of his castle. After sixteen years of solitary seclusion he was in his old age twice called to take part in the warfare of a younger race, which neither brought him adventures nor any opportunity to acquire fame or booty. When at last he died in peace at his Castle of Hornburg, at the age of eighty-two, Luther had been dead sixteen years, and the Emperor Charles V. had been interred in a cloister four years before; but the long period from the year 1525 occupies few pages in his autobiography, although it was written in the last year of his life. There will be given here fragments from his account of the Nuremberg feud.

Götz von Berlichingen.

"1512. Now I will not conceal from any one that I was desirous of coming to blows with the Nurembergers; I revolved the thing in my mind, and thought that I must pick a quarrel with the priest, the Bishop of Bamberg, that I might bring the Nurembergers into play. I waylaid ninety-five merchants who were under the safe conduct of the Bishop; I was so kind that I did not seize any of their goods, except those belonging to the Nurembergers; of these there were about thirty. I attacked them on the Monday after Our Lord's Ascension-day, about eight or nine in the morning, and rode along with them all Tuesday, that night, and Wednesday: I had my good friend Hans von Selbitz with me, and altogether our party amounted to thirty. But

the other travellers were numerous; these I drove away in small bodies to whatever places they appeared to belong. My comrade, Hans von Selbitz, also an enemy of the Bishop of Bamberg, about a fortnight afterwards burnt his castle and a city, called, if I remember it rightly, Vilseck, so that this affair bore double fruit.

"In order that every one may know why and wherefore I quarrelled with and attacked the men of Nuremberg, I will state the causes. Fritz von Littwach, a Margrave's page, with whom I had been brought up as a boy, who had been my companion-in-arms, and who was very good to me, once disappeared mysteriously in the neighbourhood of Onolzbach, being made prisoner and carried off, so that for a long time no one knew where he was or who had carried him away. Long afterwards, the Margrave caught a man, who gave him and the knights accompanying him many true tidings. Then it became known where Fritz von Littwach had been taken to; so I begged and prayed of my patron and relation Herr Hans von Seckendorf, who was the Margrave's major-domo, that he would procure me the confession of the traitor. Thereby it was discovered that those in the service of the Nurembergers had done the deed, and it might be assumed that he had been taken to one of their houses or a public gaol. This was one of my grounds of complaint against the Nurembergers.

"Further, I had hired a servant called Georg von Gaislingen, who had promised to enter my service, but who had been, when with his Junker Eustach von Lichtenstein, stabbed and severely wounded by the men of Nuremberg; his Junker had been so likewise, but survived. Although many others besides the Nurembergers were hostile to Fritz von Littwach, yet I never perceived any one who had 'belled the cat,' as they say, or had taken up the matter, except poor true-hearted Götz von Berlichingen: these are the grounds of

offence that I have everywhere and in every way notified and proved against the Nurembergers, every day in which I have negotiated with them before the commissaries of his Imperial Majesty, and also before the ecclesiastical and temporal princes.*

"I will now show further what happened to me and my relations in the Nuremberg feud. The States of the Empire ordered out four hundred horsemen against me, amongst whom were counts and lords, knights and vassals; their challenges are still in existence. I and my brother were put repeatedly under the ban of the Empire, and in certain cities the priests and monks fulminated fire and flame at me from the pulpit, and gave me up to be eaten by the birds of the air, and everything that we had was taken from us, so that we could not possess a foot's breadth of anything. There was no time for festivities; we were obliged to conceal ourselves, and yet I was able to do my enemies some injury, both to their possessions and otherwise, so that his Imperial Majesty several times interposed and directed his commissaries to negotiate between us, to regulate all things and bring about a reconciliation; thereby his Imperial Majesty hindered many of my projects, and occasioned me more than two hundred thousand gulden' worth of loss, for I intended to have carried off both gold and money from the Nurembergers. It was my project then, by God's help, to overthrow, beat, and imprison all the Nuremberg soldiers, and even the burgomaster himself, who wore a large gold chain about his neck,

* Götz's method of acting is characteristic: he enters into a quarrel with the rich Nurembergers, seeks for causes of quarrel, and waylays their merchants. The supposition that the Nurembergers hold a good comrade of his in durance is sufficient for him; of a like character is the ground of offence, that they had stabbed in another quarrel a servant whom he had wished to take into his service. There is nothing further said of Fitz von Littwach, than that Götz was obliged to reconcile himself with the Nurembergers. The grounds upon which Götz broke bounds are in themselves remarkable, as will be perceived in the following narrative.

and held a mace in his hand, and also all their horsemen and their standard bearer, when they were on their way to Hohenkrähen; I was already prepared for it with horse and foot, so that it was quite certain I should have got them into my hands. But there were some good lords and friends of whom I took counsel, whether I should on the appointed day appear before his Imperial Majesty, or put my project in execution. Their true and faithful counsel was, that I should honour his Imperial Majesty with a visit that day, which counsel I followed to my great and evident loss.

"I knew when the Frankfort fair was to take place, when the Nurembergers were to go on foot from Würzburg to Frankfort by the Spessart. I made a reconnaissance and fell upon five or six; amongst them there was a merchant whom I attacked for the third time, having in half a year, twice made him prisoner and once deprived him of property; the others were mere bale packers of Nuremberg: I made semblance as if I would cut off their heads and hands, though I was not in earnest; but they were obliged to kneel down and lay their heads upon a block; I then gave one of them a kick behind, and a box on the ear to the others: this was the way I punished them, and then let them go their way. The merchant whom I had so frequently waylaid crossed himself and said: 'I should sooner have thought that the heavens would fall in than that you should have waylaid me to-day, for only some days ago, about a hundred of our merchants were standing in the market-place of Nuremberg, the talk turned upon you, and I heard that you were then in the forests at Hagenschiess waylaying and seizing property.' I myself wondered that in so short a time the rumour of my riding hither and thither should have reached Nuremberg. Soon after, his Imperial Majesty took the matter in hand, and arranged it at Würzburg."—Thus far Götz.

Schärtlin von Burtenbach.

Sebastian Schärtlin does not exactly belong to the same class. He was not of noble origin, and had to thank his military talents for his knighthood. He was born in the year 1498, and studied arms under Fronsperg. From 1518 to 1557 he was actively employed in almost all the military affairs of Germany, in the service of the Emperor, and in that of the city of Augsburg. For a time also he served in the French army, as on account of his participation in the Smalkaldic war he had been obliged to leave Germany. He had more than once commanded large armies, and was in great repute as a bold and experienced general; he is an interesting contrast to Götz. The one the noble cavalier, the other the citizen Landsknechte leader; Götz the jovial companion-at-arms, Schärtlin the practical man of business. The lives of both were full of adventures and not free from inexcusable deeds: both died at a great age; but Götz dissipated his time and property in plundering expeditions and knightly deeds, while Schärtlin helped to decide the fate of Germany. Götz understood so little his own times and his interest, that he, the aristocrat, allowed himself to be made use of by the democratic peasants as a man of straw; Schärtlin understood his own time so well, that after the unfortunate Smalkaldic war he withdrew into Switzerland a rich man, and a few years afterwards was reinstated triumphantly in all his honours. Götz had all his life a strong hankering after the merchant's gold, yet after all his daring plundering expeditions had but little in his coffers; Schärtlin made money in all his campaigns, bought one property after another, and knew how to command the highest price for his services. Both gave proof of character and of party fidelity; both were honourable soldiers, and the knightly consciences of both were according to our judgment too lax. Götz, at whose want of prudence we sometimes smile, though

fond of booty, was yet in his way painfully conscientious; Schärtlin was the cautious but agreeable egotist. All the good qualities of decaying knighthood were united in the simple soul of the possessor of Hornburg, whilst the Herr von Burtenbach was, on the contrary, thoroughly a son of the new time; soldier, negotiator, and diplomat. Both were with the Imperial army which invaded France in 1544; Schärtlin, in the prime of life as a general, Götz as an old gray-headed knight with a small troop of vassals: the same year Schärtlin was created Imperial Lord High Steward and Captain General, and acquired seven thousand gulden. Götz rode, ill and lonely, in the rear of the returning army back to his castle. Both have written their lives in a firm soldier's hand; that of Götz is less skilful and well arranged, but his biography will be read with greater sympathy than that of Schärtlin: Götz takes pleasure in relating his knightly adventures, as good comrades recall their recollections of old times over a glass of good wine; Schärtlin gives a perspicuous statement in chronological order, and favours the reader with many dry but instructive details of great political transactions; but respecting himself, he prefers giving an account of his gains and his vexatious quarrels with his landed neighbours.

These quarrels, nevertheless, however uniform their course, claim the greatest interest here; for it is precisely by them that we discover how much the proceedings of the landed nobility had changed since the beginning of the century. There is the same love of feuds, as in the youthful days of the Berlichingen; deeds of violence still continue to abound, and numerous duodecimo wars are planned; but the old feeling of self-dependence is broken, the spirit of public tranquillity and of courts of justice hovers over the disputants, neighbours and kind friends interpose, and the lawless seldom defy the Imperial mandate or the will of the reigning princes

without punishment. Sudden surprises and insidious devices take the place of open feuds; instead of the cross-bow and sword, adversaries make use of not less destructive weapons —calumny, bribery, and intrigues. Satirical songs had for a century been paid for and listened to with pleasure, and the travelling singers made themselves feared, as they ridiculed a niggardly host in their songs at a hundred firesides.

Schärtlin relates as follows:—

"Anno 1557. In this year I, Sebastian Schärtlin, bought the territorial domain of Hohenburg, together with Bissingen* and Hohenstein, from a Bohemian Lord, Woldemar von Lobkowitz, and from Hans Stein, for fifty-two thousand gulden, and took possession thereof in the presence of my son and son-in-law, and many other nobles, on St. Matthew's day, and received the homage of the vassals in the market-place. The same summer I restored the castle of Hohenstein, and so repaired it as to enable one to reside there. Now about Michaelmas day my son went with his wife and children, and took up his residence there; and prepared rough and hewn stones, lime, and wood, for repairing the castle of Bissingen; and in the winter he caused the well to be put in order; for that purpose the neighbouring prelates gave me beautiful oak, and with their horses and those of the city of Donauwörth, and by all the neighbouring peasants the carting was done.

"The 18th September, 1560, Count Ludwig von Oettingen caused one of my husbandmen of Reutmannshof to be carried prisoner to his office at Harburg, where he was kept without bite or sup, because he and his sons in defending themselves had had a quarrel with certain peasants of Oettingen, who had opened his gate and forcibly driven over his land; nevertheless no one had been hurt. On the Monday following,

* Hohenburg and Bissingen lay in the territory of Oettingen. The Counts of Oettingen claimed to be lords paramount over these properties.

the Count, with five hundred peasants and fifty horses, fell with a strong hand upon my wood, where he had no territorial rights, caused my acorns to be shaken down, and without notice or warning carried off by violence women, children, and waggons belonging to me. When I arrived the same day at Bissingen, and learned all this, I and my two sons, together with our cousin Ludwig Schärtlin and Hans Rumpolt von Elrichshausen, and a force of two-and-thirty horses, entered his domain, and close to his castle of Harburg seized a peasant and two of his vassals, and carried them prisoners to Bissingen. As his horsemen and archers had at their pleasure passed close to Bissingen under my very nose, with great parade and firing off of guns, so did I the like at Harburg with the above-mentioned horsemen, in order to excite my adversary to a skirmish, but no one would come out against us. Yet at last they shot at us with blunderbusses. On the Thursday after, the Count rode to Stuttgard for a shooting match, and as he knew well that I would not give way to him, he spoke evil of me to their princely highnesses the Elector and Count Palatine, and other counts and nobles, screening himself so as to get me into disgrace and disfavour. Duke Christoph of Würtemberg especially, who had previously been favourably disposed towards me, recalled this year the pension of a hundred gulden which he had given me. The Count had besides so excited his brother, Count Friedrich, against me, that he also attacked me with violence. Afterwards both Counts strengthened themselves with horse and foot, against whom we brought into the castle of Bissingen a hundred good experienced archers, and the concourse of troops on both sides was great. The Counts had brought me and mine into ridicule with the people, by songs and other poems, proverbs, and writings, and also with His Imperial Majesty, the Electors and other princes, counts, and lords. They accused me of being an exciter of tumults, and

a quarrelsome breaker of the public peace, and gave out everywhere that I was their tenant, vassal, and dependent, who was doubly bound to them, and had forgotten my feudal duty, and such-like lies, in the hope of injuring me and mine by their falsehoods. Now whilst I was preparing for being attacked, the Count Palatine, Duke Wolfgang, and Duke Albrecht of Bavaria, being the nearest princes, interposed; they wrote to both parties to keep the peace, and offered with Duke Christoph to bring about an amicable negotiation, so that the prisoners on both sides should be freed, and all the hired troops dismissed. This I was willing to do; but as Count Ludwig von Oettingen—nicknamed Igel—the Hedgehog—had begun all the mischief, I demanded that he should do it first. But the Count would not give freedom to the people, but placed Ratzebauer, who was my vassal alone, and owed neither fealty nor allegiance to Oettingen, before the criminal court. To all eternity it will not be shown that I and mine, by this purchase, became lawfully vassals, for we bought Hohenburg and Bissingen, together with all that appertains to them, as freehold properties, and as territorial domains which are independent and have criminal jurisdiction. Yet the princes would not leave the settlement to us, but gave us manifold admonitions to be peaceable; so I dismissed my hired troops, and in this transaction I well perceived that Duke Wolfgang, who before was my gracious protector, had also fallen away, and had become inimical to me. But in spite of all the princely mediations, Count Ludwig one evening advanced with many horsemen and some hundred peasants against the castle of Bissingen, and began a skirmish, with our horsemen of whom some were in the field and others issued forth, in which none received injury. As the enemy could do nothing, they returned again, a laughing-stock to all.

"I brought all this business before the Supreme Court of

Judicature, and made complaint against Count Ludwig for his delinquencies against me, hoping, as also happened, that I might bring this matter to a just conclusion, though the princes showed such a party feeling.* Meanwhile, Count Igel meanly cast odium upon my name everywhere by printed writings and calumnious songs; and in the presence of the Count von Mansfeld, erased from the armorial shield of my son Hans Bastian, which was upon the Inn, the prefix 'Herr von Bissingen,' which nevertheless had not been placed there by my son himself, but by the landlord; and Count Friedrich caused his bailiff publicly to proclaim, at the consecration of the church at Buchenhofen, that if one of the Schärtlingers should go thither, every one should beat him.

"In the year 1561, Count Lothair von Oettingen came during Lent to Augsburg; he sent many friendly words to me, as that he and his other brothers were quite sorry that his brother Count Ludwig had treated me in so unseemly a manner. Besides which, he complained to me of his brother, that he would not give him his marriage settlement or any residence; it therefore became necessary for him to behave hostilely towards him, and he begged of me to yield him knightly service. Thereupon I thanked him for his sympathy, and regretted that with him also things did not go satisfactorily; but I let him know that there was a truce between me and his brother, and that I was engaged with him before the Supreme Court, that I did not willingly put my foot between the hammer and the anvil, but that if otherwise he wanted any knightly service, and would inform me of it, I would be his servant, and would not refuse to furnish horse and armour.

* The princes stood by the members of their own order; and this family, as we know, belonged to the higher nobility. Their struggle for seigniorial rights over property occasioned many battles in the sixteenth century; and the claims of Schärtlin appeared to them particularly arrogant, as his nobility by birth was more than doubtful.

"It was the custom annually at Bissingen to go on Holy Ascension Day to a fair and dance that was held behind the castle, and there was also shooting, whereat, this year, my son Hans Bastian gave his company. Then Counts Ludwig and Friedrich sent the bailiff of Unter Bissingen, together with other horsemen, to the fair, armed with five blunderbusses. They placed themselves there, and wished to hold their ground; my sons accosted them, asking why they placed themselves thus armed. To whom the bailiff answered that his lords had sent him to guard this place, and that the supremacy belonged to the Counts of Oettingen; which my son gainsaid, as the parents of the Counts had sold it, and it belonged to me, and he bid them take themselves off. Upon this the bailiff rode away with these words, that he would soon return after another fashion; and presently, from the footpath horsemen and infantry were to be seen coming; whereupon my son sent certain servants and vassals to the castle and the church tower, to await the enemy. Suddenly the Count's people, numbering about forty horsemen and three hundred foot, came riding and running at full speed, attacked my son, and cousin Ludwig, and their sharpshooters and vassals with spears and firearms, pressed quite up to the barrier of the fair, and closed the gates by overpowering force. On the other hand my son and his followers placed themselves on the defensive, fought them at close quarters, and firing at them from the castle and towers, shot two of the Count's horses and two of his men, one in the body and the other in the leg; thus they kept them at bay, and at last put them to flight, but, thank God! no misfortune happened to him or his. Afterwards, however, when my son had entered the castle with his people, and was eating his supper and taking no further heed, Count Lothar, that honourable man, who had before said so many friendly things to me, returned about six o'clock, and fired thirty shots

at the castle with four powerful guns upon wheels, and blew away full twelve bricks. About nine o'clock they returned to Unter-Bissingen: both Counts strengthened themselves in the night, and came again in the morning with many people. As my son and my cousin Ludwig had no expectation of another attack, they came over to me early in the morning; then the burgomaster and certain councillors went out to the enemy and inquired what their intentions were, as there was no one in the castle but women and children, they also said that the domain was under process and Imperial neutrality. Thereupon the bailiff from Harburg made reply that they had come yesterday and again to-day with good and friendly intentions, to claim their lord's rights of supremacy, but they had been fired at, whereby great damage had been done to them. They desired to occupy the *Platz* to-day, but if they were fired at, it would be seen what they should do in return. Upon this the people of Bissingen answered that they were poor people, and whatever might be done would have to be answered for. Afterwards the Count's people again advanced to the *Platz*, two hundred men strong with four guns and a drum, and after performing certain dances, and drinking, each one plucked a leaf from the linden trees; after this defiance, and firing, they withdrew, leaving behind them an ambuscade of two thousand men. All this I notified and complained of to his Imperial Majesty and the Supreme Court; thereupon a mandate was sent to both parties, that we should under pain of disgrace and outlawry not molest each other any further, and together with this a summons to appear before the court on the 20th of August, which were both delivered to the Counts, who answered in a most unseemly way that it was all a falsehood. I besides this protested against the injuries done to me.

"On the aforesaid grounds, and because there was no end to their hostile behaviour, and also as neither law nor right

were of any avail, I was compelled for the sake of mine honour and for protection against the molestation of the two above-mentioned Counts, to send a statement to His Imperial Majesty of the Roman Empire, to the Electors and Princes, Counts and States of the Empire, and also to the five divisions of nobility and the knighthood generally; I also made a like statement by word of mouth to the estates of the country communes, and fully apprised them and their governor, my worthy lord of Bavaria, of whom I was appointed representative, and further the city of Augsburg, whose vassal I am, of the whole transaction, and besought of them all, counsel, help, or support. These addressed a threatening document to the Counts, admonishing them to leave to me and mine, our rights, in peace; adding that if they did not, they would not abandon me. At the same time they recommended me to employ nothing but law. Now as so many calumnious songs and sayings had been circulated concerning me, one to whom I had perhaps done some good composed an admirable pasquinade and song upon the Count *Igel* von Harburg, and cut him up well.

"On the third of October, *Igel*, with fifteen hundred men, horse and foot, amongst them certain Landsknechte, together with five pieces of heavy artillery, advanced against my cousin Ludwig at Oberringingen, having sent before him certain nobles to demand of him to give up his house. But Ludwig Schärtlin had by my commands, two days before, supplied himself with three Landsknechte, certain blunderbusses and hand-guns of my son's at Bissingen, and with powder and shot. So he awaited the storm, as he hoped for a father's reward from me for his knightly truth and faith. He himself went out to these nobles, and answered them with threatening words; if Count *Igel* would come in a neighbourly and friendly manner, like his brothers, he should partake with him of his sour wine; but coming in

such a fashion, he could not open his house; he had a house for himself, and not for the Count of Oettingen, and the Count would find he had to deal with a soldier. Each party withdrew behind his defences, but the Count entrenched himself in the outer court, and by the fire of his artillery destroyed the battlements of the towers, all the windows, roofs, and chimneys, and two persons. On the other hand, Ludwig Schärtlin defended himself valiantly, shot the master-gunner of the Count's artillery and another person, and wounded besides many of the soldiers, of whom some afterwards died. Thus they fought from seven o'clock in the morning till six in the evening. In the night Ludwig caused the Count great alarm and disquiet; meanwhile he fortified himself, and again on the morrow defended himself valiantly. But when I, Sebastian Schärtlin, Knight, learned these things, I hastily sent on to Bissingen, according to the advice of Count Albrecht of Bavaria, four hundred soldiers, amongst them good marksmen from Augsburg, with powder and shot, iron cramps, and good material of war. Then I scraped together six-and-twenty thousand gulden, and provided helmets, powder and shot, also certain waggons and guns from the city of Memmingen; a great troop of Landsknechte and horsemen all appointed to be at Burtenbach on the fourth, and I myself came there in the evening, after I had put everything in motion. That same night, Count Wolf and Count Lothar came to me at Burtenbach in a friendly way, and complained to me that their brother, Count Ludwig, had also deprived them of their parental inheritance, and they entreated me to unite myself with them. So we made a written and sealed compact, that both the Counts and their brother Friedrich, with his marksmen, and all their power of horse and foot, should unite themselves with us, and I was to provide five thousand vassals, or other horsemen, and bear the expense of the war. But if I should restore the young

Counts to their parental inheritance, they should pay two thirds, and I one, of the war expenses. We hoped Count *Igel* would tarry before Oberringingen, and in case he conquered it, would proceed to Bissingen to besiege my son. But the Count on the fourth of October raised the siege, and withdrew himself disgracefully, after he had laid waste and plundered my cousin's fore-court and whole village, and carried off all the women and children: yet my cousin was very near getting hold of one of his guns. When Count *Igel* perceived that we had come to an accommodation with his own brothers—Count Friedrich excepted, who would not act either with or against him—he fled the country, and went first to the Count Palatine, Duke Wolfgang, and afterwards to Duke Christoph von Würtemberg, to whom he lied, and told many monstrous stories; such as, that I, with the assistance of His Imperial Majesty, the Kings of Bavaria, and city of Augsburg, and the league of Landsberg, had endeavoured to drive him from his people and country.

"Meanwhile I strengthened myself, and at the end of two days I determined to make an expedition, and cross the Danube with a force of seven thousand men, horse and foot. But as it had been perceived by the two Princes, the Palatine, and Würtemberg, that the Count would be driven away, and become a guest in their country, they both of them advanced, the Duke of Würtemberg in person, with his horsemen and some guns, with the intention of not allowing me to cross the Danube, or to give me battle. The Palatine had before urged me extremely not to have recourse to arms, as his Princely Grace could not consent to this expedition of mine. His Imperial Majesty, and the Colonel of the Suabian troops, had also enjoined me to keep the peace, whereto also the Bavarian King and the city of Augsburg had repeatedly admonished me, and had offered to accommodate these affairs by negotiation. So with the loss of four thousand gulden,

and in spite of my having been plundered, and my cousin endangered, I consented to sheath my sword and keep the peace, to come to an amicable agreement, and to fix a meeting at Donauwörth. Negotiations were carried on there for a fortnight, and brought to a conclusion by the arbitrators of Bavaria and the Palatinate, to the effect that we should on both sides maintain peace, and as there was no other hope of peace between us, and no better way of settling matters, I should sell the property to the Count. This I would not do, as I wished to have no transactions with the Count. Yet at last I gave in so far, to the purport of the settled agreement, that I would submit myself respectfully to both Princes, and give up the supremacy of Hohenburg and Bissingen, on payment of sixty-two thousand gulden; but not withdraw from it till I was paid the last penny in peace and security."

Thus far Schärtlin. In spite of his complaints of loss, it may be assumed that the sale, at least in a pecuniary point of view, was advantageous to him, but certain it is, that it did not put an end to his quarrels with the Count. For years they both continued to make complaints before the Supreme Court of Justice and the Emperor; and to make violent and mutual attacks on each other. At last the adversaries were obliged to shake hands in presence of the Emperor.

Hans von Schweinichen.

About the end of the sixteenth century the deeds of violence of the noble landed proprietors were less barefaced and less frequent. Most of them became peaceful Landjunkers, the ablest and poorest sought shelter at the numerous courts. When Götz was young every Landjunker was a soldier, for he was a knight, and the traditions of knighthood had influence even in great wars. But it was just then that the

great change was preparing which made the infantry the nucleus of the new army; from that time an experienced Landsknecht who had influence over his comrades, or a burgher master-gunner, who understood how to direct a carronade, was of more value to a general than a dozen undisciplined Junkers with their retainers. The power of the princes had for the most part, through the new art of war, mastered that of the lower nobility, and had made the descendants of the free knights of the Empire, chamberlains and attendants of the great dynasties. The new roads to fortune were flattery and cringing. The old martial spirit was lost, but the craving for excitement remained. The Germans had always been hard drinkers; now drunkenness became the most prominent vice in those provinces where the vine was not cultivated. Ruined property, prodigious debts, and insupportable lawsuits disturbed the few sober hours of the day. The sons of the country nobility attended Latin schools and the University, but the number of those who pursued a regular course of study was small, for even throughout the whole of the next century the higher offices of the state which required knowledge and skill in business, as well as the most important posts as ambassadors, were generally filled by burghers, and whilst the nobility seemed only capable of holding the higher court appointments, it was generally found necessary to send the son of a shoemaker, or of a village pastor, to a foreign court as the representative of sovereign dignity, and to make the noble courtier his subordinate travelling chamberlain. Thus the country nobility continued to vegetate—sometimes struggling against the new times, at others serving obsequiously, till, in the Thirty years' war, those of superior character were drawn into the violent struggle, and the weaker sank still lower.

Hans von Schweinichen lived during this period of transition, which was about the end of the sixteenth century; he was a Silesian nobleman of old family, groom of the bedchamber,

chamberlain, and factotum of the Quixotic Duke Heinrich XI. of Liegnitz. We see the characters of both, in juxta-position in two biographies written by Schweinichen. One is the account of his own life, 'Life and Adventures of the Silesian Knight, Hans von Schweinichen, published by Büsching, three parts, 1820;' the other an extract from it, with some alterations and additions: 'The Life of Duke Heinrich XI., published in Stenzel; Script. Rer. Siles. iv.,' both, works of great value as a history of the manners of the sixteenth century.

The old royal house of Silesian Piastens produced, with a few exceptions, a set of wild, wrong-headed rulers, with great pretensions and small powers.

One of the most remarkable among them is Heinrich XI. von Liegnitz, the dissolute son of a worthless father. When the latter, Duke Friedrich III. was deposed by the Imperial commissioners in the year 1559, and put under arrest as a disturber of the community, the government of the principality devolved upon his son, then twenty years of age. After ten years of misrule he quarrelled with his brother Friedrich and his nobility, and in a fit of despotic humour caused the States of the duchy to be all imprisoned. Whilst the indignant members were appealing against him to the Emperor, he himself undertook an adventurous expedition through Germany, making the round of numerous courts and towns as a beggar, during which, the lack of money plunged him into one embarrassment after another, and led him into every kind of unworthy action. Meanwhile he was suspended, and his brother, who was not much better, was established as administrator. Heinrich complained querulously, undertook a new begging expedition to the German courts, and at last made his solicitations to the Emperor at Prague; he was still under the severe pressure of pecuniary embarrassments, but finally succeeded in obtaining the restoration of his duchy. Now followed fresh recklessness and open opposition to the Imperial commissary,

a new deposition and strict imprisonment at Breslau. From this imprisonment he escaped and wandered about in foreign parts as a friendless adventurer; he offered his services to Queen Elizabeth of England in her war with Philip of Spain; and at last went to Poland to fight against Austria. He died suddenly at Cracow in 1586, probably of poison.

If in his shatterbrained character there was anything out of the common way, it was his being entirely devoid of all one is accustomed to consider as honourable and conscientious. He had not the frivolity of his courtiers who cast off all reflection, but he entirely lacked all moral feeling. Being a prince, this recklessness for a long time answered, for with a pleasing facility he slipped out of all difficulties, and with a smile or dignified surprise, made his way out of positions that would have brought burning blushes to the cheeks of most others. It was indifferent to him how he obtained money; when in distress he wrote begging letters to all the world, even to the Romish Legate, though himself a Protestant; from every court and city which he visited, and where according to the custom of those times he was entertained, he endeavoured to borrow money. Generally the host, taken by surprise, came to terms with Schweinichen, and instead of the loan, a small travelling fee was given, with which the Prince was content. He had a wife, an insignificant woman, whom he was sometimes compelled to take with him; she had also to make shift and contract debts like him, and after having forced herself on the hospitality of the rich Bohemian nobles, she sought for loans through Schweinichen, and received their courtly refusals with princely demeanour. All this would be simply contemptible if there was not something original in it, as Duke Heinrich, in spite of all, had a strong feeling of the princely dignity which he so often disgraced, and was as far as outward appearance was concerned a distinguished man. Not only with his Schweinichen, but also in the courts of foreign princes, indeed

even in social intercourse with the Emperor, he was according to the ideas of those times an agreeable companion, well skilled in knightly pursuits, always good humoured, amused with every joke made by others, quick at repartee, and in serious things he appeared really eloquent. In some matters also he showed in his actions traces of a manly understanding. However unseemly his tyrannical conduct, as Duke, towards his States, however strange his open resistance to the Imperial power, and however childish his hope of becoming elective King of Poland, yet the foundation of all this was the abiding feeling that his noble origin gave him the right to aspire to the highest position. He was always engrossed with political interests and plans. Nothing ever prospered to him, for he was unstable, reckless, and not to be trusted, but his aims were always great, either a king's throne or a field-marshal's staff. It was this, and not his drunken follies, that cast him down from his throne, and at last into the grave. On one other point he was steadfast,—he was a Protestant; although he did not hesitate a moment to demand loans of his Catholic opponents in the most shameless way; yet when the Papal Legate promised him a considerable revenue, and indeed his reinstatement in his principality if he would become a Roman Catholic, he rejected this proposal with contempt. If he engaged himself as a soldier, it was by preference against the Hapsburgers. Such a personage, with his freedom from all principle, his complete recklessness, his impracticable and at the same time elastic character, and his mind filled with the highest projects, appears to us as a representative of the dark side which is developed in the Sclavonic nature.

Other princes of his race, above all his brother Friedrich, are epitomes of the faults of the German character. Mean, egotistic, narrow-minded, and suspicious, without decision or energy, Duke Friedrich was his perfect opposite.

Another contrast is to be found in his biographer and com-

panion, the Junker Hans von Schweinichen. This comical madcap was a thorough German Silesian. When a boy, as page of the imprisoned Duke Friedrich, and as whipping-boy of the son, he had early made a thorough acquaintance with the wild proceedings of the Liegnitzer court, and been initiated into all its intrigues. His father, a landed proprietor, had fallen into debt in consequence of having once become security for Duke Heinrich. Schweinichen was co-heir to a deeply involved property, and up to an advanced age was engaged in endless quarrels with the creditors, and also with his relations, who had been surety for him, and for whom he had been surety. This was indeed, towards the end of the sixteenth century, the usual lot of landed proprietors. But besides this, he for many years joined in all the mad pranks of his princely master, which were for the most part rather of a lax nature, so he came in for no unimportant share of these frivolous proceedings. The moral cultivation of those times was undoubtedly on the whole much lower than that of ours, and he must only be judged by the standard of his own time. He was no man of the sword, and his valour was tempered by a strong degree of caution. Always in good humour, and at the same time crafty, furnished with great powers of persuasion, he contrived to glide like an eel through the most difficult situations with the open bearing of an honest man, and the most good humoured countenance in the world. Even when most dissolute he still clung to the hope of redeeming the future, and whilst living as a wild courtier, he considered himself as an honourable country nobleman, who had to preserve the good opinion of his fellows. He had always a small degree of conscientiousness in domestic matters; his was not however a burdensome or strict conscience, and demanded only occasional obedience. He valued himself not a little, and gradually began to take less pleasure in his master's vagaries. The endless changes, the quarrels with Jews and

Christians, and the anxieties about the daily wine, made this life at last too irregular for him; he had always kept a diary of his own life, and seldom forgot to note down that on the previous evening he had been tipsy: at the end of each year's diary, which sometimes contained nothing but a succession of convivial parties and discreditable money transactions, he would commend his soul to God, and after that, note the price of corn in the last year. All that he had mortgaged for his lord we find marked down in his diary with a statement, as precise as superfluous, of the real worth in silver. After he had thus pretty nearly mortgaged everything, he experienced the heartfelt grief of seeing his Duke in the Imperial prison, there he parted with him, not without grief, as one parts from the friend of one's youth; but his German understanding told him that this parting was fortunate for himself. Then followed years in which he drank with his neighbours, reconciled himself with Duke Friedrich, to whom he even became chamberlain, married, leased a small property, and half as landlord, half as courtier, lived respectably like others. Afterwards, when another prince ruled the country, Schweinichen became a royal councillor, and an active member of the government; he had the gout, lost his wife and married another. He still continued to move restlessly about the country, adjusted the differences of the noblemen and peasants, occasionally got tipsy with good comrades, discharged debts, acquired landed property, increased in respectability as in age, and died highly esteemed. His escutcheon, emblazoned with eight quarterings, shone conspicuously upon the black mourning horses at his funeral, as it had done when arranged by himself for his deceased father; his effigy was cut in stone upon his tomb in the village church, and his banner hung above it, whilst the coffin of his unhappy prince was still above ground unconsecrated, walled up in a ruined chapel by zealous monks, as that of a heretic.

The following episode is taken from the biography of Schweinichen. It occurred in 1578, the time in which Duke Heinrich was suspended in his government by Imperial mandate and lived in Hainau on a fixed income under the sovereignty of his younger brother. Schweinichen was then six-and-twenty; Schärtlin had died two months before at the advanced age of eighty-two.

"Duke Heinrich found that it was no longer possible to hold a court in Hainau, and notified to his Imperial Majesty, that as Duke Friedrich would no longer give him an allowance, his Princely Grace would take it himself where he could. To this the Emperor gave no answer, but allowed things to take their course, as neither party would conform to his Imperial Majesty's commands, 'as the one prince broke jugs and the other pitchers.' Now his Princely Grace knew that the States had a great store of corn at Gröditzberg, so the Duke took counsel with me how he should capture Gröditzberg, and there keep house till he learned the Imperial determination. I could by no means approve of this affair nor give counsel thereto, for many serious reasons which I laid before his Princely Grace's consideration. For his Imperial Majesty would interpret it as a breach of the peace, and his Princely Grace would thereby make matters worse rather than better. Because I thus discussed it with the Duke, his Princely Grace was ill-content with me, and said I was good for nothing in such affairs; for he had in his own mind, determined to march out and try whether he could not take the fortress; so he commanded me to prepare twelve troopers, and to tell the Junkers that they were to ride with him, yet not to inform them where his Princely Grace was going.

Although I still continued to entreat of his Princely Grace not to do this, as he would bring the whole country upon him, and I therefore wished to dissuade him from it, yet I could not prevail with him, but he went forth, and com-

"Meanwhile Frau von Herrnsdorf invited me to a wedding; without doubt to please her daughter, to whom I was not averse, and whom I was courting. I therefore asked his Princely Grace for leave of absence, and also to lend me three horses, which he did most willingly; and as his servants were just then being newly dressed in gray cloth, I requested that those who were to accompany me might be clothed first. I then had my sword and dagger sharpened, and adorned myself as I best could. Thus I rode with three horsemen to Herrnsdorf, where the young lady received me with great pleasure. I helped to fetch the bride to Herrnsdorf, making my appearance with my trumpeter. We continued together after the wedding till the Saturday, full of jollity; and although I was in the mean time recalled by the Duke, I remained late, that it might not be perceived that I had the Duke's horsemen. On Saturday, however, I rode forth again, and when I arrived at Gröditzberg, I desired the trumpeter to blow; but when I dismounted at the castle, a good friend of mine came and informed me that his Princely Grace was very angry with me, and had sworn that he would put me in arrest in one of the rooms in the courtyard: I did not, however, trouble myself about it, but entered the castle so that my lord might see me from the corridor. Now his Princely Grace had some Polish guests with him; but there was no provision either in kitchen or cellar; so for more than an hour after the trumpeter had summoned to table, there was nothing served up. His Princely Grace sent to me to desire that I would cause dinner to be served up, and would be in attendance. In answer, I let the Duke know that I had learned his Princely Grace was angry with me; I had therefore hesitated to appear before him, but when his Princely Grace should hear the cause of my prolonged absence he would be well content. But the Duke returned for answer, that I must be in attendance; that he already

knew the cause of my prolonged absence, that I loved the maiden better than him. When therefore, at table, I presented the water to his Princely Grace, he looked very sour, but I pretended not to perceive it. His Princely Grace began a carouse, but when it was at its highest, the wine failed. Thereupon his Princely Grace sent to inform me that there was no more wine, and that I had brought him to shame by not returning at the right time. I returned for answer to the Duke that it was no fault of mine; and why had not his Princely Grace sent for wine in proper time? Then his Princely Grace informed me he had no money, but that I was to send quickly for some wine.

"I desired then to be informed what I was to do, adding that if he was angry with me, he should tell me so himself. I had meanwhile a little cask of wine, containing about six firkins, lying concealed in the cellar. When a glass of this wine was poured out for the Duke, he cried out, 'My steward, I drink to you on your return!' called me to him, and said, 'I have been very angry with you, but it is now past; see to it that you get me provisions, and above all, wine.' I answered, 'Your Princely Grace may now be merry; there will be no lack of wine; other things also shall not be wanting; but your Princely Grace had no cause to look so askance at me, for I had been with a fair lady whom you would gladly have seen.' Whereupon the Duke said, 'I like you, and am well pleased with you; I was sure that you would have something in store.' So we became again master and servant, and all ungraciousness was at an end; and thus after my gaieties I was obliged to return to my cares, and consider how I could provide for the kitchen and cellar, which, after my pleasuring, was very distasteful to me. I learnt from various sources that endeavours had been made to blacken my character with the Duke, by representing me as a traitor, and as having dealings with Duke Friedrich, with whom I had made so long

a stay; which was not the case, as I was too honourable to do the like. But it is usual to find many backbiters at princes' courts. I was desirous to learn from the Duke who my detractor was; but his Princely Grace would not tell me, and answered that he had not believed it.

"As the supply of corn and other things were nearly at an end, and there was nothing more in store, I was obliged to seek after provisions. Now Heinrich Schweinichen von Thomaswaldau had a number of old sheep which no one else would buy, and I could not buy any other cattle for want of money, as we had none; so his Grace bade me to traffic with my cousin for the old sheep, and I made a bargain with him to pay twenty silver groschen apiece for the sheep, and there were three hundred and twenty-five of them. But when we had agreed upon the bargain, he would not deliver them to me without receiving either money or security, and he would not take me as surety; so I had to return to my lord to inform him of this, and he was sore displeased that no one would trust him. He wrote a letter, therefore, with his own hands to Schweinichen, desiring that he would deliver the sheep according to the agreement. But it could not be arranged, and Schweinichen excused himself. This irritated the Duke still more; and as we had nothing but mushrooms and bilberries to eat, his Princely Grace desired me to think of some means of giving security. As I had before asked for a loan of three hundred thalers for his Princely Grace from the council at Löwenberg, and had received fair promises, I went again to the councillors, and begged of them to settle the affair; but they refused. I persevered, and at last they consented to be security for the sheep, provided I were responsible for any damage or loss. This, however, I objected to, but begged that they would trust his Princely Grace, for they should not be the worse for it. So I persuaded the council to become security with their seal to the old higgler for half

a year, and we obtained provision again from the old sheep. These were frequently dressed in eight different ways, also the mushrooms in three different ways, and the bilberries in two ways. With this his Princely Grace and we all were obliged to be content, and to drink bad Goldberger beer. Meanwhile autumn drew on, and we were able to obtain birds. But when I went to set gins in the wood, I had great difficulty with the retinue, who all wished to scour the wood and get birds for themselves. Although his Princely Grace himself forbad it, no one would desist therefrom, so that I was obliged to put the Junkers under arrest in the room in the courtyard, and the common people in the tower. I became thereby very unpopular, yet it could not be helped. His Princely Grace went every morning himself to catch birds, and that was also my pastime. Otherwise the time passed very tediously; although I had not much rest, as I had to procure provisions, which was a source of great trouble to me.

"Now his Princely Grace perceiving that it was difficult for him to maintain himself at the Gröditzberg, and that no allowance could be obtained from Duke Friedrich, hearing likewise that the Arnsdorf pond had been fished at an earlier period than heretofore, and that when drawn, a certain quantity of carp had been caught and placed in reservoirs, he ordered me to provide some waggons, and rode himself with fifteen horsemen to Arnsdorf. As it was almost evening, and there was no one near the reservoir but the pond watchman, his Princely Grace had a large number of the fish taken out, as many as the five waggons could carry, and returned therewith to Gröditzberg.

"Whilst the Duke was having the waggons loaded with fish, the alarm was given at Liegnitz; thereupon the Burgrave Kessel and Hans Tschammer, the master of the horse, galloped off with five horsemen, to prevent any fish from being carried

away; but they were too late, for the greater part of the waggons laden with fish were gone, besides which, they perceived that his Princely Grace was there in person, and stronger than themselves. His Princely Grace did not give them a kind greeting, but gave Kessel a blow on the back, saying, that if he allowed a word to pass his lips that was not seemly, he should be his prisoner, and would find that the Duke would treat him as a rebel. So these five were obliged to let the matter pass, and thank God that they had got so well out of it.

"On the following day the pond was again to be drawn for fish, and Duke Friedrich expected that Duke Heinrich would return and seize more of them; so he proceeded thither himself, taking with him five-and-twenty horsemen, and likewise fifty arquebusiers, who were concealed among the bushes under the bank. His Princely Grace however remained at home, but sent me and a foreigner, Hans Fuchs, a captain of Landsknechts, together with six horsemen to Arnsdorf, with directions to greet Duke Friedrich kindly, and say that my lord had been compelled by necessity to carry off the fish on the preceding day, and he begged he would not take it amiss; that Duke Friedrich was to consider it as the provision due to him, and his Princely Grace entreated him in a friendly way to send him yet another supply of fish for provision.

"But Duke Friedrich looked black, knit his brows, and answered thus: 'As for this greeting of his Princely Grace, if he sent it with a true brother's heart, he thanked him for it; but two days ago the fish had been carried off from the reservoir, which greatly annoyed him, and if he had come there in person no good would have arisen from it.' He was quite unfriendly, and said that no more fish should be sent, and if an attempt should be made to take them away by force, he would guard them. Thus I departed from Duke Friedrich,

and asked Kessel for a dish of fish, as we wished to breakfast at Perschdorf, whereupon Duke Friedrich ordered them to give me what I wanted.

"Now when I came with such an answer to my lord, he was sore displeased, and made all kinds of projects, and wished to take the fish by force. Meanwhile there came intelligence that Duke Friedrich was again going to fish the next day, and would have a guard with him. Then my lord said to me: 'Hans, we'll have some sport; reckon how many horsemen we can muster; we will go and frighten Duke Friedrich a little at the Arnsdorf pond.' But I would not consent to this, and objected to any such plan, as their hearts would have been much embittered thereby towards each other. Duke Friedrich had also many Poles, servants of the nobility, with him, and they were powerful. His Princely Grace however would not give it up, but promised me he would not speak an angry word to any one, and I should see how he would drive away Duke Friedrich and his followers; thereupon I made a reckoning, and found that we could bring together a force of nineteen horsemen, three trumpeters, six arquebusiers, and two lackeys, wherewith Duke Heinrich was well content, and commanded me to take with us one waggon with fish barrels, as Duke Friedrich would not be so uncourteous as to refuse to present us with some fish.

"Early in the morning his Princely Grace left his castle for Perschdorf. There he received information that Duke Friedrich had gone in a little boat on the pond. On hearing this, his Princely Grace said to me: 'Hans, now is the time, advance.' Now Duke Friedrich had placed a sentinel at the end of the dam, who as soon as he observed anything, was to fire a shot as a signal. As soon therefore as this shot was fired by the Duke's sentinel, I caused one of the trumpeters to blow, and then another, and afterwards all three together. Then, as I was afterwards told, a great tumult arose, and Duke Friedrich

and his attendants called out for their armour, and Duke Friedrich was in so great terror on the pond, that they could hardly prevent his fainting. At last he sprang out of the boat and waded in the mud, so that he lost his breath. When the arquebusiers whom Duke Friedrich had with him, heard the trumpeters, they ran among the bushes on the meadow; so that there was no one to be seen when he called for his guard, and some shots that fell on the lappets of Duke Friedrich's coat, and on his steed, were the only answer, and he made off to Liegnitz with all speed. As soon as the others saw that their lord was riding away, they followed his example, and only nine horsemen remained by the reservoirs; among them Leuthold von der Saale, Balthasar Rostitz, and Muschelwitz. So when his Princely Grace approached them, they took off their hats, and my lord greeted them graciously, and inquired where their master was; to which they replied that they did not know. Whereupon my lord replied, that he had not come as an enemy, but as a brother, and added: 'I have brought with me a fish-barrel, hoping that my brother would hold friendly intercourse with me, and not be uncourteous, but make me a present of a dish of fish. And as I am expecting foreign guests, I will take twenty large pike, sixty of round pike, and a score of large carp.' Those who were to have fished withdrew, and von Saale protested that his Princely Grace should not take away the fish. My lord, however, did not enter into parley about it, but compelled the peasants who had run away to descend to the reservoir and catch the fish. And his Princely Grace packed the fish himself in the barrel, and commanded the Junkers to tell Duke Friedrich that he should not have fled from him and his troopers, as he had come with friendly intentions; but it was clear that a bad conscience could not conceal itself. Also that Duke Friedrich might come the next morning and help him eat the fish; and he added: 'But if your Lord will

not come, do so yourselves if you are honest men, and be not afraid as you have been to-day.' After this his Princely Grace said to me: 'Hans, did I not tell you beforehand that I would drive away my brother? Are you content? I will in like manner drive him from Liegnitz, you will see; it will not take long.' Thus we returned to Gröditzberg in good spirits."

Thus far Schweinichen. The reader will have no difficulty in discovering that no one thought of attacking the Duke in his castle. When winter drew on he himself became weary of this caprice, and determined to make another expedition through Germany, which Schweinichen very wisely opposed, but for which he afterwards exerted his wits to procure money.

In the year 1675, a century after Duke Heinrich and his faithful Hans had undertaken their first wild expedition through Germany, there appeared in Silesia on the great heath of Kolzenau, which since the war had lain waste and desolate, a strange and monstrous animal, such as in the grim time of yore had rent the Silesian thickets with its horns, when the first Piastens ranged through the woods with the hunting-spear and arrow. And above in the royal castle at Liegnitz, the last Piasten Duke, the young Georg Friedrich celebrated his birthday with his nobles. As the rare venison was placed on his table, the joyful sounds of the trumpet rang through the city, and the cannons thundered as often as the health of the new Duke was drunk. But thoughtful people in the country, trembled on account of the wild monster that had come into their woods and to their young lord, as an ill omen from the olden time; and they shook their heads and prophesied misfortune. The last elk that was slain in Silesia was for the last joyous repast of the last of the Piasten. A few days after he died; and when his coffin was borne in the evening through the streets of Liegnitz, pitch wreaths were burnt at every corner, and hun-

dreds of boys dressed in black, carried white wax tapers before their deceased lord. The German Silesians grieved over the fall of the great Sclavonic dynasty, which had once led their fathers into this land, and had first shown through them to the world, that the union of men in a free community is more beneficial to a country, than despotic government over slaves. But this truth had afforded no safeguard for the lives of the lords of this country.

CHAPTER XII.

THE GERMAN IDEAS OF THE DEVIL IN THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY.

THE phantasies of the human mind have also a history; they form and develop themselves with the character of a people whilst they influence it. In the century of the Reformation, these phantasies had more weight than most earthly realities. It is the dark side of German development which we there see, and to it is due the last place in the characteristic features of the period of the Reformation.

In the most ancient of the Jewish records there is no mention of the devil except in the book of Job; but at the time of Christ, Satan was considered by the Jews as the great tempter of mankind, and as having the power to enter into men and animals, out of which he could be driven by the invocations of pious men. The people estimated the power of their teachers by the authority that they exercised over the devil. When the Christian faith spread over the western empire, the Greek and Roman gods were looked upon as allies of the devil, and the superstition of many who yet clung to the later worship of Rome, made the devil the centre of their mythology.

But the conceptions which the Fathers of the Church had of the person and power of the devil, were still more changed when the German tribes overthrew the government of the Roman empire and adopted Christianity. In doing so this

family of people did not lose the fullness of their own life, the highest manifestation of which was their old mythology. It is true that the names of the old gods gradually died away; what was obviously contrary to the new faith was at last set aside by the zeal of the priests, by force, and by pious artifices; but innumerable familiar shapes and figures, customs and ideas, were kept alive, nay, they not only were kept alive, but they entwined themselves in a peculiar manner with Christianity. As Christian churches were erected on the very spots where the heathen worship had been held, and as the figure of the crucified Saviour, or the name of an apostle was attached to sacred places like Donar's oak; thus the Christian saints and their traditions took the place of the old gods. The people transferred their recollections of their ancient heathen deities to the saints and apostles of the Church, and even to Christ himself, and as there was a realm in their mythology which was ruled by the mysterious powers of darkness, this was assigned to the devil. The name devil, derived from the Greek (diabolos), was changed into Fol, from the northern god Voland, his ravens and the raging nightly host were transferred to him from Wuotan, his hammer from Donar; but his black colour, his wolves or goat's form, his grandmother, the chains wherewith he was bound, and many other traditions, he inherited from the evil powers of heathendom which had ever been inimical to the benevolent ruling gods. These powerful demons, amongst whom was the dark god of death, belonged according to the heathen mythology to the primeval race of giants, which as long as the world lasted were to wage a deadly struggle with the powers of light. They formed a dark realm of shapeless primordial powers, where the deepest science of magic was cultivated. To them belonged the sea-serpent, which coiled round the earth in mighty circles, lay at the bottom of the ocean, the giant wolves which lay fettered in the interior of the earth or pur-

sued the sun and moon, by which, at the last day, they were to be destroyed; the ice demons which from the north sent over the land snow-storms and devastating floods; and worse than all, the fiendish Helia, goddess of the dead. Besides the worship of the *Asengötter*, there was in heathen Germany a gloomy service for these demons, and we learn from early Christian witnesses that even before the introduction of Christianity, the priestesses and sorcerers of these dark deities were feared and hated. They were able by their incantations to the goddess of death, to bring storms upon the corn-fields and to destroy the cattle, and it was probably they who were supposed to make the bodies and weapons of warriors invulnerable. They carried on this worship by night, and sacrificed mysterious animals to the goddess of death and to the race of giants. It was these priestesses more especially—so at least we may conclude—who, as *Hazusen* or *Hegissen*, or *Hexen* (witches), were handed down by tradition to a late period in the middle ages.

The remembrance of these heathen beings became mixed with a wild chaos of foreign superstitions, which had been brought from all the nations of antiquity into heathen Rome, that great nursery of every superstition, and from that ancient world had penetrated into Christianity. The *Strigen* and *Lamien*, evil spirits of ancient Rome, which like vampires consumed the inward life of men, sorceresses who flew through the air, and assembled nightly to celebrate disgraceful orgies, were also handed down to the Germans, who mingled them with similar conceptions, having perhaps a like origin. It is not always possible to discover which of these notions were originally German or which were derived from other nations.

The western Church in the beginning of the middle ages kept itself pure from this chaos of gloomy conceptions; it condemned them as devilish, but punished them on the whole

with mildness and humanity, when they did not lead to social crimes. But when the Church itself was frozen into the rigidity of a hierarchical system, when strong hearts were driven into heresy by the worldly claims of the papacy, and the people became degraded under the nomination of begging monks, these superstitions gradually produced in the Church a narrow-minded system. Whatever was considered to be connected with the devil was put an end to by bloody persecution. After the thirteenth century, about the period when great masses of the people poured into the Sclave countries from the interior of Germany, fanatical monks disseminated the odious notion that the devil, as ruler of the witches, held intercourse with them at nightly meetings, and that there was a formal ritual for the worship of Satan, by accursed men and women, who had abjured the Christian faith; and for this a countless number of suspected persons, in France, in the first instance, were punished with torture and the stake, by delegated inquisitors. In Germany itself, these persecutions of the devil's associates first became prevalent after the funeral pile of Huss. The more vehement the opposition of reason to these persecutions, the more violent became the fury of the Church. After the fatal bull of Innocent VIII., from the year 1484, the burning of witches in masses began to a great extent in Germany, and continued, with some interruptions, till late in the eighteenth century. Whoever owned to being a witch was considered for ever doomed to hell, and the Church hardly made an effort to convert them.

According to popular belief, the connection of man with the devil was of three kinds. Either they renounced the worship of God for that of the devil, swearing allegiance to him, and doing him homage, like the witches and their associates; or they were possessed by him, a belief derived by the Germans from Holy Scripture; or men might conclude a compact

with the devil binding both parties under mutual obligations. In the latter case men signed away their souls in a deed written with their own blood, and in return the devil was to grant to them the fulfilment of all their wishes upon earth, success, money, and invulnerability. Although the oldest example known is that of the Roman Theophilus—a tradition of the sixth century—and although the written compact originated at a time when the Roman forms of law had been introduced among the western nations, yet it appears that the source of this tradition concerning the devil was German. These transactions were based upon a deep feeling of mutual moral obligation, and on a foolhardy feeling, which liked to rest the decision of the whole of the future upon the deed of a moment. There is much similarity between the German who in gambling stakes his freedom on the throw of the dice, and he who vows his soul to the devil. These alliances were not looked upon by the old Church with mortal hatred; these wicked and foolhardy beings, like Theophilus himself, might be saved by the intercession of the saints, and the devil compelled to give up his rights. It is also peculiar to German traditions, that the devil endeavours to fulfil zealously and honestly his part of the compact, the deceiver is man.

Through these additions the popular mind invested the devil with new terrors, yet it strove at the same time to think of him in a more agreeable point of view. The race of giants of the ancient mythology had had two aspects for the people; they took pleasure in seeing something harmless, and indeed burlesque about them, besides the terrors of their demoniacal nature. On one hand, the deformity of their great bodies, their strength, and clumsy wit, and on the other, their supposed knowledge of magic and technical dexterity, had already been in heathen times an inexhaustible source of comic stories, by which the people poetically explained to themselves, among other things, all striking

phenomena of nature. But besides the giants there was in the heathen times a numerous host of smaller spirits in nature, who hovered around men. The hairy *Schrate* dwelt in the woods, the *Nix* sang on the banks of the brooks, a numerous race of dwarfs hammered in the mountains, elves and *Idisien*, the German fairies, played on the dew in the meadows, and the fighting maidens of Wuotan flew through the air in the form of swans or on magic horses. In house and courtyard, in barn, cow-house, and dairy, dwelt household spirits of various kinds, sprites sat under the hearth, hobgoblins glided in the form of tom-cats over the rafters, brown and gray mannikins, and sometimes white ladies surrounded the family, as guardian spirits of their domestic comfort and welfare. The repose of sleepers was disturbed by nightmares, the rye-mume sat in the ears of corn, and the little wood fairy on the felled timber, the will-o'-the-wisp in the marsh fluttered about restlessly, and endeavoured to entice men out of the right track. These lesser spirits maintained their place in Christendom, but became timid and averse to men. It may be observed in the old traditions, with what sorrow the new convert regarded the disturbance of his relations with his old friends; in some, the little sprites lamented that they also could not become blessed; in others, they are disturbed by the sound of a clock, and depart secretly out of the country. Many of their dark and malicious traits of character were also transferred to the devil, especially those of the giants. He became an architect like them, he was obliged to carry great masses of rock through the air, which he lost on his journey, or cast down in anger; he had to raise prodigious walls, and build bridges, castles, mills, and even churches. And in these works, he was almost always the person cheated, as were the giants in the olden traditions; being deprived of the reward for which he had worked. He had to guard treasures beneath the earth, in

the form of a wolf or dog with fiery eyes, or to fly as a fiery dragon, and throw treasures down the chimney on to the hearth. He was obliged to appear in person at popular festivals, and act the part of the buffoon and much belaboured opponent of the heavenly powers, in a half ludicrous, half terrific dress. Among the Germans he had his disguises; the horns, the goats' or horses' foot, the halting gait, the tail, and the black colour. It is possible that the details of his costume may be taken from recollections of the ancient satyrs, but similar strange animal figures are to be found in the festive processions of German heathendom, and in the rising cities of the middle ages, the dress of the chimney sweeper was an inestimable help.

Such were the notions which prevailed about the devil in Germany for about a thousand years. They were influenced by all the great excitements and changes of the popular mind. In times of great religious zeal, they bore a wild misanthropic aspect; but in days when the people were engrossed with worldly pleasures, they assumed a more comic and harmless form.

Then came Luther and the Reformation. Together with every one else in Germany, the devil also was brought into the great struggle of the century. The Roman Catholics looked upon him as the head of the whole body of heretics; while the Protestants took the popular view of him as a figure standing with a bellows behind the pope and cardinals, inflating them with attacks on the reformed doctrines. He was mixed up in all theological and political transactions; he sat on Tetzel's box of indulgences, visited Luther at the Wartburg, made intrigues between the Emperor and Pope, humbled the Protestants by the Smalkaldic war, and the Roman Catholic party by the apostacy of the Elector Maurice; and in all the concerns, small and great, of the people he appeared, and was busy everywhere.

This enlargement in his powers of action would probably have taken place at any period of zealous faith; but in the person and teaching of the great character who gave to the whole of the sixteenth century its impress and colour, there was something peculiar by which even the reverse of all that was holy was remoulded.

First of all, Luther was the son of a German peasant. In the recollections of his childhood, as revived by him amid the circle of his companions at Wittenberg, the devil wore a very old-fashioned, nay, heathenish, aspect; he brought devastating storms, while the angels brought the good winds, as once upon a time the gigantic eagles did from the furthest corners of the world by the stroke of their wings;* he sat as a water-god under the bridges, drawing maidens down into the water, whom he made his wives; he served in the cloister as household spirit; blew the fire as a goblin; as a dwarf laid his changelings in the cradles; as a nightmare deluded the sleepers into ascending the roof of the house, and bustled about the rooms as a hobgoblin. By this last species of activity he sometimes disturbed Luther. It is true that the ink-spot at the Wartburg is not sufficiently verified, but Luther could tell of a disagreeable noise which the devil had made there nightly with a sack of hazel nuts. In the monastery of Wittenberg also, where Luther was studying Rempter one night, the devil made such a noise, for so long a time in the crypt of the church underneath him, that he at last snatched up his book and went to bed. Afterwards he was provoked with himself for not having defied the Jack-pudding.

Thus deeply was Luther imbued with the popular superstition. But to this kind of devilry he did not attach much importance; the bad spirits who employed themselves after this fashion, he very properly called poor devils. His opinion

* Winds are nothing but good and bad spirits.—'Table Talk.'

was that devils were countless. "They are not all," he says, "insignificant devils, but country devils and princes' devils, who for a long period, above five thousand years, have been busy, tempting men, and are thoroughly clever and cunning. We have great devils who are *doctores theologiæ;* then the Turks and papists have bad insignificant devils who are not theological but juridical." From them he thought came everything bad upon earth, as for instance illnesses; he had a strong suspicion that the dizziness he had long suffered from was not natural; also conflagrations:—"Wherever a fire breaks out a little devil sits behind blowing the flame;" likewise famine and war:—"If God did not send us the holy and dear angels as guards and arquebusiers, who encamp round us like a bulwark, it would soon be over with us." Expert as Luther was in describing his own characteristics, he was equally so with the devil; he declared that he was haughty, and could not bear to be treated contemptuously. Therefore he advised that he should be driven away by scorn, and jeering questions. He thought, also, that Satan was a melancholy spirit, and could not endure gay music.*

But it was not in vain that Luther had spiritualized the Church teaching; it was owing to him that the struggle for eternal salvation began in the souls of individuals, and that the destiny of man was made to depend on his own conscience and faith in God. Through this, Satan's sphere of activity was changed, and the strife of men with the evil spirit became more especially an inward one. It was not the outward appearance and clatter of the devil that was peculiarly terrible, but his whisperings to the souls of men. The preservatives against this danger were, constant inward repentance, frequent prayer, and an enduring and loving

* At one time Luther was inclined to think that he himself had one or two especial devils as opponents, who lurked about him and accompanied him to the dormitory in the cloister.—'Table Talk.'

remembrance of God. Luther's temptations have already been mentioned; he spoke openly and honestly to his cotemporaries concerning them, and the race of men who listened with faith to his discourse were infected by him; inward temptations were commonly recognized by the Protestants, and on this point also he became the comforter and confidant of many.

The difference between the old and new Church was first shown in the conception of the free contract which man concluded with hell. In the old Church it had been made comparatively easy to believers to escape from the devil. By certain pious outward observances the Christian could in the worst case, even when deeply engaged with Satan, free himself from him in the last hour. Therefore, in the contracts made between men and the devil before the Reformation, the latter was almost always the person defrauded; this business-like and immoral method of reaching the kingdom of heaven excited the deepest indignation of Luther. He strongly proclaimed the doctrine of St. Augustine; that man being corrupt through original sin is a prey to the devil, and can only be put in the way of salvation by continual inward repentance, and that therefore unrepentant sinners cannot be saved from hell. The result of this was, that after the sixteenth century, those men who had concluded a compact with hell were generally supposed to be carried off by the devil. The sorrowful end of the traditional Dr. Faust is well known; he was not Satan's only prey. It was generally believed, and published in hundreds of tracts, that men of profligate character, reckless drunkards, gamblers, swearers, or enemies against whom a bitter hatred was entertained, were carried off into the nether regions. And the hand of the devil was thought to be distinctly perceptible in the twisted neck of the dying sinner. Luther himself had once to interfere in such a case. A young student at Witten-

berg, an ill-disposed youth, had invoked the devil, and had offered himself up to him. Luther took the affair in hand with great earnestness and dignity; he first crushed the culprit by severe admonitions, then he knelt down with him in the church, laid his hands on him, prayed with fervour, and caused the youth finally to repeat after him a penitent confession; thus was the business settled. Even historical personages did not escape the melancholy fate of being possessed by the devil. The belief in this continued beyond the Thirty years' war.

In the last century the compact which the Duke of Luxemburg, the opponent of Prince William of Orange, had made with the devil, was imparted to the public with all kinds of details and comments; and it is characteristic of that fastidious period, that the Duke imposed upon the devil, among other conditions, that he should only appear to him under an agreeable, not in a terrible form.* Following the examples given in the Bible, the new Church treated more kindly those that were possessed. Luther and his followers assumed that these, through sins which might be forgiven, and sometimes through small errors, had fallen into the power of the devil, and that it was a duty and a merit in believers to drive out the evil spirit by prayers and adjurations. It was not all lunatics or epileptic persons who were considered to be possessed of the devil, but as he was supposed to be at work everywhere, they often had the satisfaction of finding him. The most wonderful indications of his activity were watched with credulous zeal. Weak-minded women principally were impressed with the belief that they were tormented by the devil; and it was the natural result of this imagination that in their sickly condition they expressed

* 'The compact alliance of the world-famed Duke of Luxemburg—General and Court-Marshal to the King of France—with Satan, and the terrible catastrophe that followed.' Frankfort and Leipzig, 1716.

the most violent repugnance against ecclesiastics, and the pious ceremonies with which they were favoured. But how far preconceived opinions can confuse the senses, not only of the sick, but also of the healthy, and falsify the witness of their own eyes and ears, we discover with astonishment in numerous accounts of eye-witnesses, who are fully worthy of credit, but who perceive and believe in the most impossible things in those possessed. To mention a very absurd instance supposed to have happened in the time of Luther, at Frankfort on the Oder; a maiden who had always been weak in mind was possessed by Satan in the following way: "When the suspected maid seized any one by the coat or beard, or otherwise, she always found money instead in her hand, which she instantly put into her mouth, crunched, and at last swallowed. This money one could only get out of her hand by force. In the same way she everywhere found needles. Sometimes she handed over to the people who stood around her this devil's money, which she had caught from the walls, tables, benches, stones, and ground. It was good coin, groschen and pfennige, but there were some bad red ones among it." This extraordinary occurrence is related in a pamphlet by Dr. Andreas Ebert, an ecclesiastic; and his account is confirmed by Theodore Dürrkragen, the president of the city council. Luther, as with hundreds of other critical questions, was asked his opinion about this: he was distrustful, desired to know whether it was good money; and at last advised that the maiden should be sedulously taken to church and prayers made for her to God. There were some difficulties about this cure, for the devil in the maiden insulted the clergyman during his sermon, and gave him the lie. In vain also did a Roman Catholic priest endeavour to conjure the devil from her, who treated him with scorn and despised his holy exorcism. The power, however, of evangelical prayer compelled Satan to depart;

the maiden became vigorous and sound, after her recovery knew nothing of the past, but continued to be, as servant maid, a useful member of the community.*

Such were the ideas of German Catholics and Protestants. Nothing shows more strikingly the power which Luther personally exercised, than the influence he gained over his bitterest opponents. The Roman Catholic dogmas, it is true, withstood his assaults, and between the new bulwarks of faith which he had thrown up, and the closed fortress of the old Church, there raged for a century a furious war. But his mode of thought, his language, and above all the special character of his spiritual life, influenced the German Catholic Church of his day as well as the Protestant, in a way which was both peculiar and one-sided. The rude formalism of her indulgence trade and pious brotherhoods, did not entirely disappear; but he gave a new tendency to her inward spirit. Earnest study, acute thought, dialectic skill, and what was of more value, a greater moral depth, became the necessary requisites of the Roman Catholic champions. They learnt to preach and compose their controversial writings in Luther's language and method, even appropriated the strong abusive expressions of the great heretic, and sought to imitate felicitously the popular humour to which Luther owed not a little of his success. The words of the evangelical songs, the titles and contents of Lutheran works were always parodied. Perhaps the internal resemblance is nowhere more striking than among the most talented of the Ingoldstadt University. Andrea, Scherer, and their friends might but for the difference of their dogmas, and above all personal hate, as well be Lutherans as Roman Catholics. Thus there arose between the ecclesiastics of both confessions a sometimes laughable, but frequently a dis-

* The title of the manuscript is, 'Wonderful Tidings of a Money Devil; a strange, incredible, yet true story. Published at Frankfort on the Oder, where it took place, 1538, 4.'

gusting contention to drive the devil out of the possessed. If a possessed person became in question where the two Churches were in collision, each endeavoured to show the power of their faith by healing the patient; the evangelical by the prayers of the clergy and parishioners, the Roman Catholics by exorcism; the soul which was saved brought glory on the fortunate Church. Among the numerous accounts which we find of suchlike exorcisms, the following, which proceeds from the Roman Catholic camp in the neighbourhood of Ingoldstadt, is remarkable from its detailed narration and interesting psychological features. It was published shortly after the event, in a pamphlet, with the title, 'A terrible but quite true history, which took place between Hans Geisslbrecht, citizen at Spalt, and his wife Apollonia, in the bishopric of Eystätter. By M. Sixtus Agricolas. Ingolstadt, 1587.' The narrative begins as follows:—

"Hans Geisslbrecht, citizen at Spalt, after the death of his first wife, married Apollonia, widow of the late Hans Francke of Lautershausen, in the Margravate of Brandenburg; here he continued after his marriage, and lived with her more than a year; at last, however, the miserable marriage devil entered in, so that there was between them both, nothing from morning to night but scolding, quarrelling, strife, crying, chiding, and nagging; besides which, what was altogether most terrible, great blaspheming of God and wicked swearing. The said Geisslbrecht came home quite drunk on Friday the nineteenth October of the past year '82, and began according to his old custom to quarrel and swear at his wife; and they carried this on, as most of their neighbours heard, almost throughout the night. On Saturday morning Apollonia came to Anna Stadlerin, her neighbour, and said: 'Dear Stadlerin, have you not heard how rudely and shamefully my husband has behaved during the whole night?' 'Yes,' answered the other, 'I and my Stadler have, alas! but too well heard what cater-

wauling and blaspheming has been going on between you; the neighbourhood can have no peace whilst you live in so un-Christian a way.' To this the said Apollonia answered with grim anger: 'Ah me! if our Lord God will not deliver me from this violent man, I shall call upon the devil to come to my help.' Now mark what followed! On the said Saturday evening, when Geisslbrecht's cows came home from the meadow, and she was about to milk them, as was her wont, there came two birds like swallows, of which at that time of year none are to be seen in the country; and they flew swiftly round about her head. Before she could look up from under the cow there appeared near her a tall man (but, alas! it was the devil in human form), who said to her: 'Ah, my dear Appel, how much do I sympathize with you, that you are in such trouble; your life is so hard and wretched, and you have such a bad husband, who behaves so ill to you, and who intends to make away with everything, so that nothing may remain to you after his death. Do one thing, promise that you will be mine, and behold I in return, will promise to convey you in this very hour to a beautiful enjoyable place, where you shall for ever and ever do nothing but eat, drink, sing, jump, and dance; in short, where you will spend such days of pleasure as you have never seen all your life long, for the kingdom of heaven is not such as your priests say; I will teach you better.'

"These great promises of the embodied Satan induced the wretched woman thoughtlessly to give him her hand, and say that she would become his; instantaneously the said Apollonia became possessed by him, and forthwith he suggested to her that she should hasten with him to the loft; in the hope that she would there hang herself. Now when the aforesaid wife of Geisslbrecht sprang up from the cows and hastened to the house, the before-mentioned neighbours perceived her condition, and called out to her husband: 'Oh,

Ulrich, come! the old shepherdess (her husband used to be called the shepherd) has lost her senses.' After that, they ran towards her, and before they could reach her she laid herself in the pond before the cottage door, with the intention of drowning herself therein. When she had been taken out, many other neighbours came to her, and brought the poor possessed woman into the house again; she desired directly to be carried up to the loft, and cried out: 'Oh let me go! Do you not see how luxuriously I live, that I do nothing but eat, drink, jump, and dance, and lead an enjoyable life?' When Apollonia was brought into her room, it required first two and afterwards four men to hold her. Meanwhile a messenger was sent at midnight on Saturday to the venerable and learned Dean and pastor, Herr Wolfgang Agricola, to beg that his reverence would hasten to the old shepherdess, as she had that evening lost her wits. But the prudent Dean thought the affair was by no means so urgent as they represented it, and did not wish to go out so late on this holy night, but he apprized them, that he had always feared that these continual godless quarrels and disputes would at last come to this conclusion; he bade them, in case the woman became so refractory that they could not hold or restrain her, to fasten her meanwhile with two chains, which was done.

"In the evening after he had performed matins, the Dean, like a man who had been accustomed to deal with the like cases, provided himself with a small reliquary, wherein was a piece of the holy cross, and of the pillar on which the Lord Christ was scourged; further, an Agnus Dei of the year of the Jubilee; and lastly a piece of white wax, which had been consecrated by *summus pontifex*; all these he carried upon his own person. When he went to the house of Geisslbrecht and was perceived by Apollonia with her deceitful indweller, who so evil treated her, it would be impossible for any one who had not been there, to believe how she began to rage,

rave, and gnash her teeth; for although she lay bound by two chains, yet four men had enough to do to hold her. The reverend Dean began, and said: 'Ah, Appel! may God in Heaven hear me; this great calamity grieves me to the heart; Christ bless thee; what has happened to thee?' Then the poor woman began with a strong manly voice, such as was not her wont before: 'Hui, *Pfaff*, begone with you, what do I want with you and your Christ? I have enough for my whole life, do you not see how well I live? I need your heaven no more.' Thereupon the Dean answered: 'I see, alas! how well you live; I would not wish your pleasant life to a dog, let alone a man.' In order to prove whether she was possessed or naturally crazy, the Dean took the above-mentioned relics, and as she turned her back to him, placed them with his hand upon her head without her knowledge: what a lamentation, complaining, and whining she set up from that hour! how she raged in her chains, foaming at the mouth like a champing horse, and snapped at the Dean; concerning all this, those who held her, and the many people in the room will give a better report than his reverence. Her constant cry was, 'Oh, *Pfaff*, *Pfaff!* * take away that thing from my head, if not, behold I swear to you that I will tear you to pieces with my teeth; I will trample on you, tear you limb from limb, and so kill you: Oh! take that thing off, and lay upon me instead six large sacks full of stones, they will not be so heavy.' 'Tell me,' said the Dean, 'what it is? I will then directly take it off.' The evil one answered: 'I know well what it is, but I would do anything—*cum venia*—rather than tell you.' 'What?' said the Dean earnestly, 'you will not come out with the words? quickly bring me a white cap, with it I will fasten this small article upon your head.' 'Yes,' answered the evil one, 'you may well say a small article; if it were so small, it would not scorch so much.' 'I conjure

* Pfaff was the nickname of the Roman Catholic priests in those days.

thee, by the God of Abraham, Isaac, and of Jacob, to tell me what it is.' But he gave no answer. Meanwhile, the poor tormented woman thirsted much, and with all her imaginary costly good living, would gladly have had something to drink; at a sign from the Dean the women presented her first with some consecrated water; but this was no drink for the evil one, he wished to have other water: the Dean asked why he would not drink this, as it was only water. He answered, '*Pfaff*, you lie, it is consecrated water.' Thereupon the women gave her to drink from the great holy well, which was consecrated every year on the golden Trinity Sunday; but little as the former was to her taste, still less would she have to say to this; it was necessary to withdraw it quickly, for she knew well what it was. Then the Dean said that it was only water; but the evil one answered him furiously: 'You always say that I lie, but I see that you can lie also; it is your holy water.' When therefore they gave her the common water she said, or rather he in her, although there was not the slightest apparent difference in the vessel or the water, 'That is the right kind.' Thereupon they mixed the three waters together, opened her mouth with a spoon, and had much to do to pour it in and to make her swallow it, thereupon she, or rather he through her, began thus: 'Oh, *Pfaff!* how you deal with me.' The Dean answered: 'As you have tasted one you may taste the other also; I know well what a bad guest you are, I and you must have a better understanding before we separate.' 'What *Pfaff*, do you wish to drive me away? I will sooner tear you to atoms.' The Dean replied: 'You desperate villain! I think you hanker after me, the smallest of little popish priests, therefore you shall, before all the world, be permitted to enter into me as your pride impels you; I will open my mouth wide enough, and make no sign of the cross before it.' Then the evil one answered: 'Yes, enter, enter I would, if I could only

catch and bite your tongue and your fingers.' 'That I fully believe,' said the Dean, 'if it were in your power to destroy me and every Christian man in his mother's womb, I hold it certain you would spare no pains to do so; and listen to me, Satan, I hold this head fast till you tell me what is in this little reliquary.' 'Then,' he answered, 'it is a holy thing.' 'What holy thing?' inquired the Dean. 'That of Jerusalem,' said the evil one. The Dean replied: 'What of Jerusalem? make short of it, and be not so ceremonious.' To which Satan exclaimed: 'Oh, leave me in peace; you know that I cannot name it.' 'Then,' said the Dean, 'these are rotten, lame excuses; you can very well name it if you will, therefore I conjure you, by the death of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you publicly declare what it is.' 'Oh,' said he, 'it is indeed a piece of the holy cross, and a bit of the pillar at which He was scourged.' The Dean replied: 'Do you then believe that Christ died for us?' To which he said: 'Why should I not believe it? I was not far off.' Upon that the Dean took down the reliquary, and laid the above-mentioned Agnus Dei upon her head without her perceiving it. She complained, wept, and cried out, even more than before. On perceiving this strange agitation, the Dean wished again to hear what it was that so discomposed her. Then the bad spirit called out: 'Ho! ho! you shall make me tell you that again.' Then there was much talk on both sides, till at last the evil spirit was constrained by the hand of God to say, 'It is truly an Agnus Dei.' The Dean then asked: 'Where was it consecrated?' To which the evil one said: 'If the whole world stood by, they should not compel me to name the city.' The Dean said: 'Indeed there is no place in all the world where you and yours do meet with so much damage and opposition, therefore make not so much ado, but say what is the name of the city?' As the Dean pressed him so hard, and would not let him rest, he began: 'It is called R! R! R!' To which the Dean said:

'Hui! Hui! young scholar, still better.' Then the evil one, 'O! O! O!' To which the Dean said: 'Oh, what a hopeful scholar! you desperate miscreant, you mortal enemy of the holy true faith; add the M! M! M! thereto, and God will have imparted to you a threefold truth.'

"Now when the Dean found that he had but too well ascertained the condition of the unhappy woman, and that all the means which had formerly been of use to others, were of no avail against an enemy so powerful and well entrenched, he deferred the matter, till by God's grace a better time and opportunity should occur. He commanded that they should watch assiduously day and night, that she should not get hold of anything wherewith she might cause bodily injury either to herself or others; he also begged the neighbours and her appointed watchmen to look after her, which they did day and night out of brotherly and sisterly compassion.

"The following days the aforesaid Dean made preparation with all diligence as far as possible for the great work, and had enough to do to provide what was necessary for such a thorny and dangerous business.

"Meanwhile, it came to pass that a young Lutheran, a queer preaching fellow, Johannas Bäuerlein, son of a furrier of this place, came here fresh from his examination, and imagined he had already received full power for this work; like the poet in his wretched tragedy, who in the year 1545 in the parish sacristy at Wittenberg, drove the devil in and out of a possessed person. This preacher had heard from his mother, who dwelt in a house opposite to Geisslbrecht, of this lamentable affair, had seen us many times go in and out, and had even stood among the people in the room; but on account of his great beard wherein, like Samson's strength, lay all his science, we did not recognize him. He went there several times in our absence, and saw how pitifully and miserably the poor woman was plagued and tormented by the

evil spirit. He spoke to it; but ah, dear God! at his weak lifeless words, the old dog would not come out, but only carried on his monkey tricks with him. At last he called the husband of the unhappy woman to him, and accosted him thus: 'My dear Hans Geisslbrecht, that your wife should be delivered from this miserable Satan, by whom she is so severely tortured, will never take place by the aid of your popish priests; it is beyond their power. But I,' said the sharp blade, 'will take with me another servant of the altar, and we will drive him out by the pure word of God.' This was revealed to us by the aforesaid Geisslbrecht. It grieved all the ecclesiastics, and not unreasonably, coming from one who had been born, baptized, brought up, and confirmed, and had communicated here, and whose father, mother, and sisters had lived, and most of them already died, good Catholics; he alone having apostatized. So that we all came to a determination that during the act of exorcism, which was fixed to take place with all secresy on the Thursday, he should be in the church even were we to bind him like the poor woman, and drag him in. Not that we wished any harm to him, but only that he might see what an anxious, great, and dangerous work this was, and not such a thing as when one enticeth the tom-cat from behind the stove. However he smelt fire, was warned, and went off.

"On Wednesday, after vespers, the suffering of the sick person became so great, that they hastened to fetch the Dean, for if she did not obtain help, she would be torn to a thousand pieces by the evil one. When the said Dean, and some of us arrived, we found such a wretched state of things as will be present to us all our lives; for although the more than miserable woman was extended on the ground, on a wretched little bed, fastened by two chains so that she could not move hand or foot, and had also two men holding her arms whilst her brother sat astride on her legs, and some

women on her body, thinking thus effectually to hold her down, yet all was of no avail. The evil spirit reared himself up, and raised all that were over him in such a manner, that any one could have slipped under her back. But the most horrible of all was, that the evil spirit raised himself up between the skin and the flesh, in the form of a great adder or serpent, so that we could see and lay hold of him. Swiftly as by nature they glide along the earth, so did he glide backwards and forwards in the body; at one moment into the head, afterwards into one arm, then into the other, or suddenly into the feet; and when in the body, it became hot, as if burning with pure fire; finally the evil one glided into the heart, which swelled up like a twopenny loaf, and crept and coiled himself round it, just as a viper does round a tree; he shook and squeezed her heart together, so that it began to crack, and we one and all thought that the fierce and infuriated spirit would have entirely suffocated and destroyed her, for in her whole body not the smallest vein could stir. The Dean cried out and called continually upon God in heaven. Meanwhile they opened her mouth with a spoon, but for a long time she showed no signs of life, till they poured something down her throat; then her heart began to beat again. That was a great comfort to us, and we all did our best to revive her, till she came a little to herself. Then the Dean commanded that they should cut her hair clean off her head, for it was all overrun with blood; he ordered also that the women should wash her clean with lye, and said he would return again forthwith.

"Thereupon the Dean returned home, and desired me, his brother Magister Sixtus, Herr Georg Wittmeier, his confessor, Herr Bernhardt Eisen, who was then deacon, Wilibald Plettelius the student, who had lately come from the German college at Rome, and Leonhard Agricola, the student, to come to him; and told us with great grief that it was certain that if the poor woman could not be relieved this

evening, the evil one would destroy her even if she were of the worth of a thousand men. 'Therefore come quickly with me,' said the Dean; 'have a good heart, be undaunted and fear not, no harm shall happen to you; and if it should be requisite that in the exorcism you should reply to me *et cum spiritu tuo*, or Amen, pay the closest attention, especially you priests.' Then he gave to one of the students to place under his dress, what was necessary for this ceremony, and taking us first to the church, admonished us all there to pray with faith, opened the Sacrarium, took from the viaticum a holy host, laid it in a small napkin on his body, put off the cope again, and went in form and appearance as before with us to the house. Then he commanded him who bore his other vestments to wait in the barn till further orders. He went into the room, knelt down on the ground by the poor woman, laid his hand, as he was always wont to do, on her head, and spoke to her; but the former old insults were beginning again, when the Dean without any one perceiving it, put his hand in his bosom and drew out the napkin with the ever-blessed host, and placed it under his hand on her head. As soon as she perceived it, she made in her bed three great bounds. Then said the Dean: 'Appel, do I hurt you with my hand? How does it happen that at one time you can bear it and at another time not?' 'Oh, yes,' said she, 'I can bear the hand well, but take away what you have under your hand, otherwise you will destroy me.' 'God forbid!' said the Dean; 'but tell me what is on your head?' Then answered the evil one: 'Look you, wait a little!' (here followed an examination as before), and at last the evil spirit said what it was. Thereupon the Dean proceeded: 'But I wish to know yet one thing, whether you are alone, or have any companions with you?' 'I am alone,' said the evil one. 'What is your name?' 'I am called *Spielfleck*,' said the evil one. 'Oh, that is nothing, you have never in the begin-

ning told me the truth; I must bring it out of you perforce, you shall acquaint me with your right name, for I must and shall know it.' Then the exorcism began again, till the evil one was constrained to say, *Schwamm.** Thereupon the watchers and nurses exclaimed: 'Oh that is truly his right name, it is what she has always called him.' Then the Dean answered: 'Well-a-day! God grant we may soon lay hold of Schwamm, and send him down to Lucifer in hell, that he may wipe his shoes with him.' The evil one: 'Oh no, no, spare me.' Upon this my brother called on me, Herr Magister Sixtus, to draw near and hold the napkin, containing the most holy and revered sacrament, on her head, and commanded at the same time that all her chains should be unloosed and done away with; whereupon many were much afeared. He himself had his cope, stole, and books brought to him, and having thus dressed and prepared himself, when the poor woman was loosened from all her shackles, he took an old red stole in his hand and said: 'Behold, *Schwamm!* I now come to thee in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. This threefold, indissoluble, godly bond shall now bind thee down in the abyss of hell, so that you shall never more throughout all eternity do any detriment or injury, either to persons, or cattle, or any other creature.' He took both her hands, wound the stole three times round her, and commanded the evil one, by the great power and dignity of that which lay on the poor woman's head, to give up all further struggle. Thereupon the Dean turned himself towards the people, of whom there was such a multitude, that the room, windows, barn, and streets were all quite full, and spoke to them:—

"At the conclusion of the holy prayer, the Dean gave directions to us students whom alone he had employed as assistants,

* This does not mean mushroom, still less bath sponge, as the Dean understood it; it is the Bavarian word *Schwaim*, pronounced *Schwam*, "The Floating Shadow."

to place ourselves round the miserable woman; gave to one the book, to another the candle, to each one what he would need for this ceremonial, and then began in the name of God a *modus conjurationis* so lofty and so exceeding well grounded on the holy, godly Scripture, and with such assiduity and earnestness, (as he had in this a pure, strong, and undaunted lion heart) that our hearts began to tremble and the hairs of our heads to stand erect. During this noble exorcism, which lasted some time, the evil spirit did not make any especial blustering, only, perceiving a boy showing his teeth in at the window, he desired to be allowed to break them; but this his desire could not be granted. During the ceremony the surrounding people, who could better observe, than one of us who had more to do, saw distinctly that the eyes of the woman, which were naturally dark, but in this misery had become gray and fiery like cats' eyes, gradually recovered their natural colour; that her limbs which were all distorted, returned to their right position, and that her colour, form, and whole nature, which had been totally altered, was restored delicate, fresh, and vigorous. Some who were standing by, testified and confirmed by oath, that they had seen during the process a black bird in the form of a thrush fly out of the mouth of the woman. We do not publish this as a truth, because we none of us saw it, for we do not wish to report anything but what we could in case of necessity confirm with a good conscience, and by our priestly dignity and the highest oath.

"This ceremony, God be praised, was throughout successfully performed, and the aforesaid Apollonia clasped her hands together. Then the Dean bent down towards her, took the stole out of her hands and asked her: 'Dear Apollonia, how are you now? do you now know me and the other people?' Then the restored one tried to spring up for joy in her little bed and throw her arms round the Dean's neck. This moistened many eyes. But her limbs and whole body were so

much torn that she had not sufficient strength, so she clasped her hands over her head, looked up to heaven and exclaimed three times: 'Oh Almighty and Eternal God, to Thee be praise, honour, and glory, for ever and ever! Oh God, forgive and pardon me for I have sinned against Thee so grievously! Oh Lord, now will I gladly die!'"

Here concludes our extract from the pamphlet. The end of it is edifying; the valiant Dean reaped the reward of his dangerous work by winning the soul of Apollonia to his Church. She exhorted her husband, and vowed a pilgrimage; and it appears that after that, the quarrelsome couple lived together peaceably. What the religious zeal of the narrator has added to the spiritual examination of the devil, is more harmless than it is in many similar cases.

The tender care of both Churches for those possessed, and the pious interest with which they regarded these victims of the devil, made similar cases become a matter of speculation. Thus in Thuringia in 1560, a herdsman, Hans the father of Mellingen, made a great sensation. He pretended that he had been compelled by a man of ill repute, to eat some food which had brought him into the power of the devil; that he had been severely handled and beaten by the devil, and showed his stripes. He was on this account commended in pamphlets to the prayers of Christendom. But once when he made his appearance at Nuremberg with a bleeding ear, his hands tied behind his back with a three-coloured cord, and there praying and begging, related his old story, that the devil himself had thus fastened his hands, the Nurembergers, took the matter up in earnest, and the audacity of the man sank before the pressing cross-examination of the ecclesiastical and temporal authorities; he acknowledged that he was a deceiver; he was placed in the pillory, and then driven out of the town. The Nurembergers did not fail to make known their discovery in a pamphlet.

But fierce indeed was the hatred with which was regarded, in the last half of the century, that other connection with hell, —the old witchcraft. Even Luther believed in witches; he mentions incidentally that such a woman had injured his mother; and in another place was angry with the lawyers who did not punish similar sorceresses when they injured their fellow-creatures. But these expressions were not intended to be very severe; he on the whole troubled himself little with this phase of superstition. He, the copious writer, never considered it necessary to discourse to his people concerning it; in his sermons he only occasionally mentions witchcraft, and his whole nature was repugnant to the application of violence. But if happily for us, Luther's pure spirit preserved him from bitterness against the devil's helpmates, his scholars and successors had little of his high-mindedness. Young Protestantism was on this point little better than the old belief. In Protestant countries the ministers of God were by no means the only persecutors; the civil authorities were also willing to follow the example of the ecclesiastical courts of the Roman Catholics, and above all of the Jesuits. The victims were countless; they amount without doubt to hundreds of thousands. It was first in the domains of the ecclesiastical princes, that the contagion burst forth, which devastated whole provinces as in Eichstädt, Würtsburg and Cologne. In twenty villages in the vicinity of Treves, three hundred and sixty-eight persons were executed in seven years, besides many who were burnt in the city itself; in Brunswick the burnt stakes stood like a little forest on the place of execution. In every province hundreds and thousands might be counted. Every kind of baseness was practised by the ecclesiastical and temporal judges; the most contemptible grounds of suspicion sufficed to depopulate whole villages. No position and no age was a security; children and the aged, learned men and even councillors, were bound to the stake, but the greater part

were women;—we shudder when we look at the method of these condemnations. It is not impossible, although it cannot be spoken of with certainty, that a victim here and there did live in the mad delusion that they were in union with the devil through magic arts; it is not impossible, although this cannot be certified, that hurtful mediums, intoxicating beverages and superstitious medicaments were in some cases used for the detriment of others. But it is the strongest proof of the infamy of the whole proceeding, that amidst the monstrous mass of old records concerning witches, we find no ground of belief that in any case the judgment was justified by the real misdeeds of the accused, though they were made the excuse for it; for so great was the degree of fanaticism, narrow-mindedness, or malice, that the mere accusation was almost certain to be fatal. Torture was applied on the most frivolous charges; the capability even of bearing pain was taken as evidence against those who held out under torture; and every kind of accidental symptom, disease of the body, outward appearance, or countless fortuitous circumstances, were also considered as evidence. The possessions of the condemned were confiscated; the greediness and covetousness of the judges were united with brutality and stupidity. This fearful disorder did not end with that century: through the whole of the sixteenth and up to the middle of the eighteenth century these horrible judicial murders continued. It was not till the time of the great Frederick that they ceased.

The literary activity of the few enlightened men who ventured to speak out in the interests of humanity against these trials for witchcraft, was pregnant with danger. They themselves had to fear imprisonment and the stake, and at least they incurred the hatred and the malice with which believing fanatics assailed their opponents. One name belongs to the sixteenth century which should ever be named with gratitude; that of the Protestant physician *Johann Weier*, physician in

ordinary to Duke Wilhelm of Cleves, who in 1593 wrote his three volumes—'*De præstigiis Dæmonum.*' Even he believed in necromancers, who, by the help of the devil, wrought mischief, in which case they were to fall under the punishment of the laws; but the witches he considered as poor miserable beldames, who, in the worst cases, only imagined themselves to be doing the work of the devil, but were for the most part quite innocent. His warm heart for the oppressed, and his noble indignation against the brutality of the judges in the cases of witchcraft, made an immense sensation. Within his limited sphere of action Weier appears to us as a supplement to Luther. Against him also the raging orthodox crew upraised themselves. The good effect produced by Weier's book was in a great manner counteracted by a flood of opposition writings. But again amidst the horrors of the Thirty years' war, Friedrich Spee, the best of the German Jesuits, wrote secretly his '*Cautio Criminalis*,' against the burning of heretics; he published this anonymously in a Protestant printing-press.

The various popular transformations of the devil did not end with the century in which Luther taught, and Weier endeavoured to banish the stake from the place of execution. The Thirty years' war brought forward another set of gloomy fantasies concerning him. Satan was considered by the wild troopers as a demon who made fortresses, and cast magic balls which could penetrate every kind of armour.

When the peace came, the war-devil withdrew into the woods, where he taught his arts to the wild huntsmen; and when there remained nothing in the land but an impoverished population devoid of faith and hope, the devil was sought after in his ancient and quiet occupation—only disturbed by the covetousness of men—as the guardian of hidden treasures. Much money and property had been buried during the long war, and was discovered by lucky accidents after the peace.

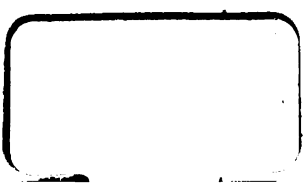
The poverty-stricken people lusting after gold, and unused to quiet labour, were powerfully excited by these treasure-troves, and the hopes of still greater. There had always been, from ancient times, treasure seekers, and magicians who were to conjure away the evil one from the treasure; and it is probable that this superstition had been imported into Germany from Rome.

Gradually the popular conception of the form and working of the devil became less vivid. In a more enlightened age it was thought wrong to speak mockingly of him, and the greatest poet of Germany gracefully idealized his image as it had been handed down from antiquity. Some of the musical composers also introduced him into their operas.

Thus did the German people seek earnestly after their God at the commencement of this great sixteenth century, and thus powerful was the devil at the close of it. Lofty exaltation was followed by enfeebling relaxation, and the striving after Christ, by the fear of hell; and the opponent of the Holy One pressed himself as a spectre into the whole life of man. Other countries were infected with these superstitions; but in Germany, for many years, the burning of witches was almost the only public action in which the deluded people showed a strong spiritual interest. The want of unity, public spirit and great political aims, was the destruction of the nation.

By the disputes of priests, the selfishness of princes, and the unhappy political position of Germany, the course of Protestantism was checked and the Roman Catholic reaction with fresh vigour raised its head. Throughout the country, in politics, in the pulpit, and in the closets of the ecclesiastics, there was more hatred than love. The minds of men languished under a spiritless dogmatism, and the hearts of believers were oppressed by gloomy forebodings. The wisest felt deep anxiety for the unhappy condition of the German Fatherland, and the devout were kept by the ecclesiastics

and countless calendar-makers in continued anxiety, and fear that the end of the world was at hand, and the frequent interference of the devil appeared to many as an additional sign of its approach. Meanwhile the mass of the people of all ranks lived in a state of refined enjoyment in the then opulent country. Luxury was great, and every kind of excess was general. Those who did not fear the devil did not concern themselves much either about God or his saints. It was under such aspects that the fearful century of wars began.

END OF VOL. I.

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